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# Assessing Social Media Adoption and Maturity in Small and Medium Enterprises: Case of Saudi Arabia



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A thesis submitted to Middlesex University in partial fulfilment of the  
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## ABSTRACT

The proliferation of social media has changed marketing and branding of organisations around the world. Social media has proved to create business value for companies; however, there is a lack of coherent and sequent studies in the field of social media for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Saudi Arabia. In addition, the literature lacks a systematic approach providing a practical means to support SMEs in getting value through social media. Since companies are affected by the social, economic and political circumstances in which they operate, this research focuses on Saudi Arabia-based SMEs.

The research aims to develop an online tool based on a social media maturity assessment model that includes maturity criteria, levels of progress and a formula to automatically calculate the overall maturity and provide guidance. Developing such a tool requires studying different aspects related to the use of social media in business and examining their statistical associations. The areas include investigation of social media adoption factors, examination of the social media value to SMEs as well as identification of barriers to success. Moreover, the research examines the maturity level of SMEs in using social media as well as consumers' social media readiness related to interacting with corporate social media accounts in Saudi Arabia. The research used cross-sectional surveys to collect primary data from SMEs, experts and social media users to answer the research questions.

The findings revealed that there is high awareness of the usefulness of social media as a marketing channel and strong support from the owners and top management in using such interactive technologies among Saudi SMEs. However, there is also clear evidence that there is a need for training in using social media in these companies which is something that the majority of companies do not provide. The main obstacles that SMEs face when using social media are insufficient dedicated staff as well as a lack of time and skills. The main reasons why SMEs do not use social media are the low perceived usefulness, the perception that there are types of businesses that do not need social media engagement as well as the lack of knowledge and skills in the field. Also, the findings demonstrate that Saudi consumers have positive perception towards using social media to interact with brands. However, there are concerns regarding trust and privacy when using corporate social media accounts.

The research develops a social media maturity assessment model for SMES and also discovers new maturity criteria which are statistically associated with the overall social media maturity of companies. These new criteria include: Number of hours dedicated for social media per week, LinkedIn corporate presence, perceived usefulness of social media, consistency of business goals with social media, providing social media training to employees, availability of financial resources and social media infrastructure in the company.





# Chapter 1- Research Background

## 1. Introduction

In recent years, social media came to be a valuable marketing and communication channel. Social media is an internet technology that is widely used by companies as a marketing and communication tool. Web 2.0 has progressed from a platform for retrieving information to an interactive channel for using and exchanging information, and cooperation (Paquette, 2013). According to Saravanakumar and SuganthaLakshmi (2012):

"The dramatic growth of community websites, such as Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn, has ushered the world into a new era of social media. The global reach is nothing short of marvellous, so much so that if Facebook were a country, it would be the third largest, next to China and India. Some even say that this is the biggest shift since the industrial revolution, which means that the world has a brand-new playing meadow".

Social media marketing has given companies the opportunity to interact directly and straightaway with their stakeholders, which made a significant shift in the way companies communicate and moved away from the old one-way communication to a two-way dialogue between the customer and the company (Matthews, 2010).

Businesses of all sizes have been profoundly affected by social media and the shift it made in marketing. However, while large companies are adopting these web 2.0 technologies, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are finding constraints and barriers in adopting such technologies (Dahnil *et al.*, 2014). SMEs are vital to any economy as they drive employment,

innovation and economic growth to economies (Kok et al., 2011), (Edinburgh, 2013), (Gide Loyrette Nouel, 2010), (Jain and Chen, 2013).

The major problem inspiring the current research is the lack of coherent and sequent studies that dive deep and explore the field of social media in the context of SMEs. There are studies related to social media readiness, adoption, success guidelines and barriers. However, the literature is short of a systematic approach that uses the outcomes and findings of these studies to develop ways to support SMEs in optimizing their customers' engagement through technology.

It is proven that companies are affected by the social, economic and political circumstances in which they operate (Al-Somali et al. (2011). Hence, in order to have reflective and genuine findings, it is important to focus research efforts on regional basis when studying topics related to business and technology adoption. This thesis focuses on Saudi Arabia-based SMEs and it contributes to the achievement of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 (Vision 2030, 2018). The SMEs in Saudi Arabia today play a key role in realising Vision 2030 and the ambitious objectives it entails. Vision 2030 was announced by the Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud in 2016. Its manifesto reads:

"Our Vision is built around three themes: a vibrant society, a thriving economy, and an ambitious nation." The second theme of the vision was explained as:

*"a thriving economy provides opportunities for all by building an education system aligned with market needs and creating economic opportunities for the entrepreneur, the small enterprise as well as the large corporation. Therefore, we will develop our investment tools to unlock our promising economic sectors, diversify our economy and create job opportunities. We will also grow our economy and improve the quality of our services, by privatizing some Government services, improving the business environment, attracting the finest talent and the*

*best investments globally, and leveraging our unique strategic location in connecting three continents".*

Since there is lack of a systematic approach in the literature related to SMEs and their adoption and use of social media in Saudi Arabia, the current research aims at addressing the gaps by assessing adoption and maturity factors that affect SMEs' implementation and success in using these internet technologies in Saudi Arabia. It also investigates how the Saudi consumers perceive and interact with the corporate presence on social media. The outcome of the current research will be used to create an online tool that will help SMEs to assess their maturity levels in using social media, identify weaknesses and strengths of their overall social media performance and provide practical support to improve their social media presence and engage audiences more effectively. The current research also reviews the relevant literature related to SME sector, social media adoption and success criteria in using these technologies.

The results also will be presented to different Governmental bodies in Saudi Arabia such as the Chamber of Commerce in Riyadh and the SMEs General Authority. The results of this study will provide insight towards the obstacles and barriers to SMEs social media adoption, where many studies proved how vital these internet technologies are for reaching, communicating and retaining customers. The insights presented from this study will help relevant Governmental entities in Saudi Arabia in providing the needed support to these organisations such as facilitating training and building skills.

### 1.1. Research background: Social media for small & medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in Saudi Arabia

There is limited literature related to the use of social media networks for marketing purposes by SMEs (Small and medium-sized enterprises) in the Middle East and Saudi Arabia in particular. There are a few studies (El-Gohary, 2012) that explore E-Marketing in small-sized companies and even fewer studies investigating e-Marketing adoption including social media

among these organisations in general. While SMEs face issues such as shrinking markets, low profitability and high competition (Achilleopoulos, 2012), a social media presence for these organisations makes a significant difference when addressing these obstacles, particularly in markets where companies rely primarily on word of mouth to promoting their offerings.

Many studies highlight the importance of SMEs to most national economies. In Saudi Arabia, Merdah and Sadi, (2011) state that the growth of the national economy is one of the critical challenges that the Saudi Government face among other issues such as diversifying national income, less reliance on oil revenue, job creation and building of skills.

The proliferation of social media has changed marketing and branding of organisations around the world (Berthon et al., 2012). Large companies integrate social media into their overall marketing strategy as well as allocating budgets for the implementation. On the other hand, SMEs are slower in adopting and less mature in using social media despite the fact that social media could be useful, especially during recession periods, when profitability is low, and the need for retaining existing customers or identifying new segments is a fundamental component for survival. SMEs are vital to almost all economies around the world; studies indicate that SMEs contribute up to 45% of employment and up to 33% of GDP in developing economies (OECD, 2017).

Recent social media usage statistics (Statista, 2016) showed significant numbers of social media penetration coming from Saudi Arabia "As of fourth quarter 2015, 35 percent of the total population were active social media users". These statistics indicate that there is an online market that can be reached through social media by companies and more particularly by SMEs. Considering the cost-effectiveness of social media advertising, the advanced targeting features it offers and the number of social media users in Saudi Arabia, we argue that social media holds

opportunities to this sector and consequently more research in this field, like the current one, will be highly beneficial to the development of this sector.

## 1.2. Research aims and objectives

The overall aim of the current research is to support SMEs in their adoption and use of social media. It is essential to provide a strategy for SMEs to succeed in using social media. One way to accomplish that is by developing an automatic assessment method for companies to evaluate their current use of social media which enables them to identify weak points and help them improve and ultimately get value through social media. Such a systematic method requires studying different aspects related to social media practices in business such as the determinants and barriers to adoption of social media, the criteria of a successful implementation and also how consumer perceive and interact with corporate social media accounts. Studying all these different aspects focusing on one country will help achieve one of the current research objectives, which is to develop an online tool that could help companies assess their maturity in social media and provide the necessary guidance and recommendations for these companies.

The research objectives are:

1. To identify which factors affect the social media adoption by Saudi Arabian SMEs, the value of social media to SMEs and the barriers to success.
2. To develop a social media maturity assessment model by identifying maturity criteria in using social media as well as to propose a formula to calculate the maturity.
3. To assess the consumer social media readiness for corporate social media accounts in Saudi Arabia.
4. To develop an online tool based on the findings of this research which will enable companies to evaluate their use of social media through a social media maturity assessment test and get guidance on how to improve their social media level.

Previous research demonstrated the importance of using social media, internet and other interactive technologies in the marketing and communication process to assist SMEs to overcome some problems. However, most of the existing studies focus mostly on large organisations which differ from SMEs in characteristics and structure. The current research addresses the gap by focusing on SMEs and their current social media practices, primarily, the use, barriers and the factors that affect social media adoption and maturity in this sector. SMEs still need to get the advantage of the opportunities that social media offer for small firms (Michaelidou et al., 2011).

### 1.3. Research problem and questions

According to Beier and Wagner (2016) "Future research related to social media should address the need for more complex models of technology adoption concerning social media applications in SMEs. This future research could validate general success factors for social media use and derive concrete business cases and successful practices regarding social media use in SMEs. Therefore, it seems necessary to investigate more in detail relationships between activities in specific social media channels and outcomes concerning concrete business objectives".

The research problem here is that the existing research in the field of social media is sporadic and not systematic as well as studies tending to focus on different areas of social media in different countries. Many studies focus on social media adoption and benefits in business. From here comes the need to create systematic research with the objective of finding ways to help SMEs succeed in using social media and at the same time receive guidance and recommendations which are suitable to their needs as well as their economic and cultural background. The major problem inspiring this current research is the need to come up with the means to support SMEs by providing guidance on how to use social media successfully and

gain value from it. This can be achieved that by studying the aspects that influence the adoption of social media as well as the maturity of using it by SMEs in Saudi Arabia and exploring the associations between different factors within a company.

Another problem is the limited literature related to Saudi Arabian SMEs and their adoption and use of innovative technology such as social media, what is considered a mature use of social media by this sector and how consumers in Saudi Arabia perceive and interact with companies through this web technology. Namankani *et al.* (2014) cited the lack of guidance to help small companies in Saudi Arabia use social media as a reason for the non-advanced use of the internet in these companies. Based on the research problem discussed here, the current research aims at answering the following research questions:

- **RQ1a:** Which criteria can be used for assessing SMEs' organisational maturity in using social media in Saudi Arabia?
- **RQ1b:** How can the maturity of using social media be calculated based on the criteria identified in this study?
- **RQ2a:** Which factors affect SMEs adoption of social media in Saudi Arabia?
- **RQ2b:** What are the objectives of using social media by SMEs in Saudi Arabia?
- **RQ2c:** What are the benefits Saudi SMEs gained from using SM?
- **RQ2d:** What are the obstacles to using SM successfully in Saudi SMEs?
- **RQ2e:** What are the barriers to social media adoption in SMEs in Saudi Arabia?
- **RQ2f:** How mature are the SMEs in Saudi Arabia and what factors are associated with the maturity?
- **RQ3:** How ready are the consumers to use social media corporate accounts in Saudi Arabia?

Table 1 summarises the research objectives aligned with the research questions.



| Research objectives   | Research questions   |
|---|--|
| 1. To develop a model to assess social media maturity in Saudi Arabia   | <p><b>RQ1a:</b> Which criteria can be used for assessing SMEs' maturity in using social media in Saudi Arabia?</p> <p><b>RQ1b:</b> How the maturity of using social media will be calculated based on the criteria identified in this study</p>  |
| 2. To investigate the adoption and use of social media among SMEs in Saudi Arabia and to explore the associations between different variables | <p>RQ2a: Which factors affect SMEs adoption of social media in Saudi Arabia?</p> <p>RQ2b: What are the objectives of using social media by SMEs in Saudi Arabia?</p> <p>RQ2c: What are the benefits Saudi SMEs gained from using SM?</p> <p>RQ2d: What are the obstacles to using SM successfully in Saudi SMEs?</p> <p>RQ2e: What are the barriers to social media adoption in SMEs in Saudi Arabia?</p> <p>Q2f: How mature are the SMEs in Saudi Arabia and what factors are associated with the maturity?</p> |
| 3. To measure the readiness of social media users in Saudi Arabia for social media corporate accounts   | <b>RQ3:</b> How ready are the consumers to use social media corporate accounts in Saudi Arabia?  |
| 4. To develop an online tool based on the final social media adoption and maturity factors and criteria findings                              |  |

Table 1 Summary of research objectives&amp; questions

#### 1.4. Research process

Figure 1 displays a pictorial representation of the research stages. The research stages start with a literature review where previous studies, theories and models related to the current research will be reviewed to form the theoretical frameworks of the different studies that will be conducted to answer the research questions. The second stage presents the conceptual framework for the studies with a detailed methodology discussion. The third stage involves the primary data collection followed by step 4 which reviews the data analysis and findings. The last phase is the development of the social media maturity assessment tool based on the results of the studies.

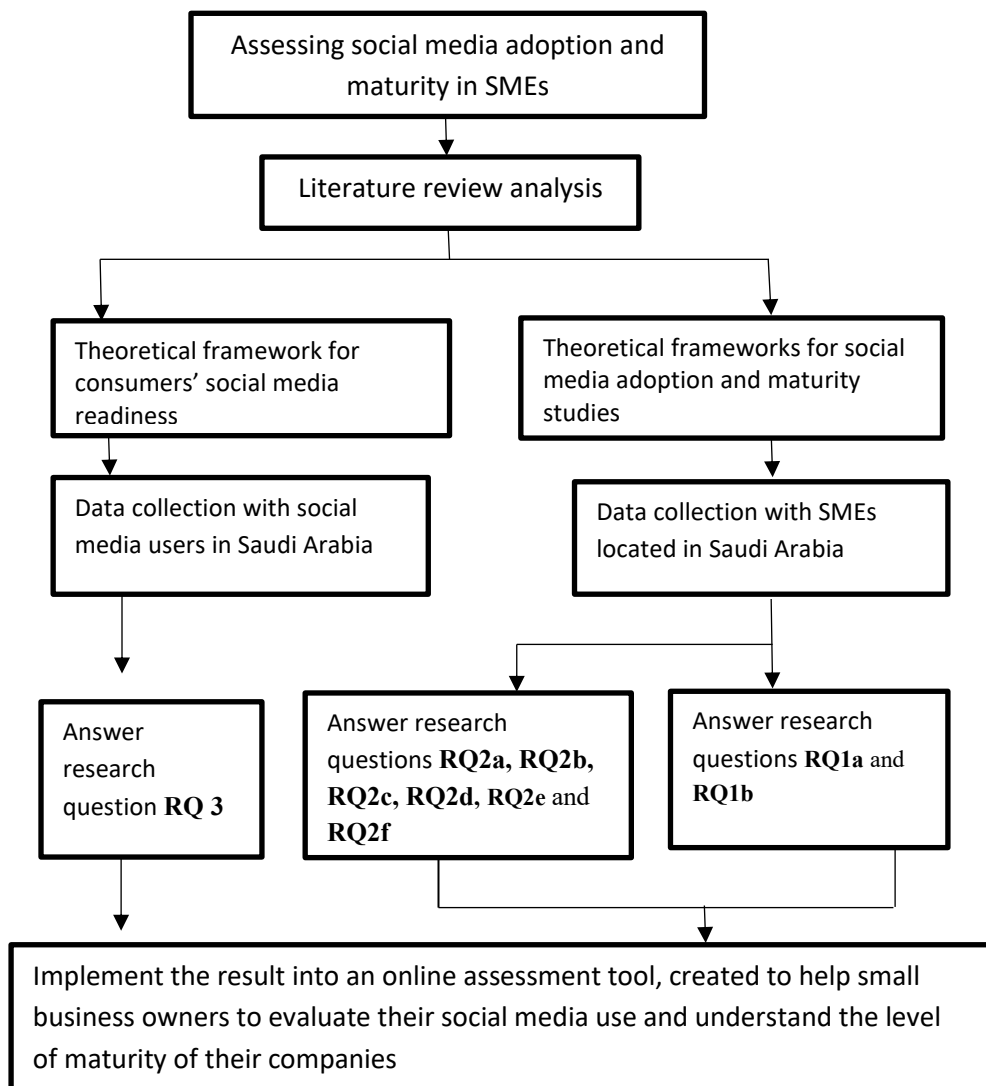


Figure 1 Research process

### 1.5. Thesis contribution

Towards the overall goal of supporting SMEs in their use and success in social media, this thesis contributes towards:

- The development of an organisational social media maturity assessment model: This model consists of social media maturity criteria, social media progress levels, and a method to automatically calculate the stage of social media maturity of companies.
- Assessing the social media adoption factors in SMEs in Saudi Arabia, the value gained from using social media and the obstacles towards using social media successfully among SMEs in Saudi Arabia.
- Discovering significant statistical associations between the maturity level of using social media and different variables within SMEs which consequently resulted in identifying new maturity criteria for using social media successfully. And add these new criteria to the initial model developed at the start of this research.
- Assessing the level of maturity of SMEs located in Saudi Arabia which sheds light on weaknesses and strengths in using social media by this sector.
- Measuring the consumer social media readiness and behaviour concerning interacting with corporate social media accounts in Saudi Arabia: The research contributes towards understanding the perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, attitude and perceived trust and privacy of social media users in Saudi Arabia towards interacting with companies on social media. This study is the first that focuses on the users' interaction with corporate social media accounts in Saudi Arabia.
- A visual social media assessment tool: <http://www.socialmedia.ac/> That helps SMEs owners to assess the success of their companies' use of social media and help them identify weaknesses and strengths with the aim of improving their usage of social media and eventually get maximum value from it.

## 1.6. Thesis outline

This thesis contains seven chapters. **Chapter 1** discusses the research background, research aims, objectives and questions and finally outlines the structure of this thesis.

**Chapter 2** provides a literature review that explores definitions, examines social media use in SMEs, identifies technological challenges, explores Web 2.0 technologies benefits and obstacles, and measures the impact of social media on business. It also discusses factors affecting SMEs adoption and maturity for social media, the context of SME use of social media in Saudi Arabia, existing theories and frameworks associated with social media use in SMEs, and consumers' social media readiness.

**Chapter 3** discusses the research methods, process, and approaches, as well as the data collection instrument development and the conceptual frameworks for research, activates A, B, and C.

**Chapter 4** discusses the data collection process, analysis and results of research activity A: The development of the social media maturity assessment model.

**Chapter 5** presents the data collection process, analysis and findings of research activity B: Social media adoption, value, obstacles and maturity in SMEs.

**Chapter 6** presents the data collection process, analysis and results of research activity C: Consumers' social media readiness for corporate social media accounts.

**Chapter 7** Discusses the findings and the outcome of research activity A, B, and C. It then discusses the research limitations as well as presenting the future work and conclusion.

## 1.7. Chapter summary

This chapter discussed the research problem and presented the research objectives and questions. The problem that inspired this research is the sporadic literature related to social

media and the lack of a systematic approach in research that can produce sophisticated models that support SMEs. The overall objective is to produce an automated social media maturity assessment model to assist SMEs in evaluating their use of social media. The research questions were formulated to answer which criteria can be used for assessing SMEs' organisational maturity in using social media in Saudi Arabia? How the maturity of using social media will be calculated based on the criteria identified in this study? Which factors affect SMEs adoption of social media in Saudi Arabia? What are the barriers to social media adoption in SMEs in Saudi Arabia? What are the benefits Saudi SMEs gained from using social media? What are the obstacles to using social media successfully in Saudi SMEs? How mature are the SMEs in Saudi Arabia and what factors are associated with the maturity? And how ready are the consumers to use social media corporate accounts in Saudi Arabia?

An essential aspect in the current research is that it examines the associations between the identified demographics, adoption and maturity criteria in order to gain a meaningful insight about the actual use of social media in these organisations.

The next chapter will review the literature related to each aspect of this research. The covered topics include definitions of social media and SMEs, technology adoption theories, and existing technology adoption models, followed by a review of studies related to social media benefits to business, obstacles that prohibit SMEs from succeeding in their use of social media, existing social media maturity models and consumers' readiness for corporate social media accounts. The literature review chapter is the first step towards answering the current research questions as it aims to establish the theoretical framework for each study in this research.

## Chapter 2 – Literature review

### 2. Introduction

The objective of this section is to explore the literature related to the field of social media and SMEs. As discussed in chapter one, the current research aims to investigate social media adoption and maturity in SMEs in Saudi Arabia. It is essential to examine the factors that affect the use of social media in this sector as well as defining the criteria for assessing SMEs maturity in using it and also to measure the consumers' readiness for corporate social media accounts in Saudi Arabia. To be able to answer the research questions, a literature review is critical for establishing the foundational base for the current study by exploring previous research done in each mentioned field as well as the related theories.

Through the literature review, the theoretical framework will be developed for our studies, which includes identifying factors that affect social media adoption in SMEs as well as the criteria for measuring the maturity in using social media and the components that help assess the consumers' social media readiness.

The first part in the literature review discusses the definitions of different key terms which are important to the current research; the following sections will discuss the adoption of social media by SMEs, the benefit of social media to businesses as well as the obstacles that inhibit companies from succeeding in their use of social media. Next, a review of social media maturity research will be presented followed by a discussion of the literature related to the consumers' social media readiness.

## 2.1. Definitions

Tech Target (2016) defined social media as “The collective of online communications channels dedicated to community-based input, interaction, content-sharing and collaboration”. They explain social media marketing as when companies make a good use of social networks to raise exposure to their brands and to reach the consumers by producing an exciting content that entice the users to interact with it. Social media is described McCann and Barlow (2015) as “An extension of traditional media employing a more sophisticated set of tools, techniques and technologies for connecting, building relationships and social interactions”. Social media is considered “interactive media” because it allows the customers to be involved and to interact with the content that the companies create according to Jones *et al.* (2015).

Hootsuite (2017) revealed that the total world population is 7.476 billion of which 3.773 billion are internet users and that means 50% penetration rate. The number of active social media users globally is 2.789 billion with 30% penetration rate, whereas the number of active mobile social users is 2.549 billion.

There is no universal definition for SMEs globally; however, there are three main parameters to define SMEs: 1) Defining SMEs based on staff headcount, 2) Defining SMEs based on the balance sheet, 3) Defining SMEs based on their annual turnover. The reason why the definitions and classifications of SMEs vary is that they depend on the level of development of the economy they operate in (Marjanova and Stojanovski, 2012). In the UK, the definition of an SME is based on the annual turnover as well as the number of employees. A small company is the one with a turnover of less than £3.26 million and fewer than 50 employees, whereas a medium company is the one with an annual turnover of between 3.26 to £25.9 million and less than 250 employees (Small and Medium-sized enterprise statistics for the UK and Region, 2010). A report by Dalberg Global Development Advisors (2011) revealed that the World Bank

defines SMEs as the enterprises with not more than 300 employees, \$15 million annual turnover and \$15 million in assets. In addition, the European Commission (2017) defined SMEs as ‘The category of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) is made up of enterprises which employ fewer than 250 persons and with an annual turnover not exceeding 50 million euro, and/or an annual balance sheet total not exceeding 43 million euro’. A report by U.S. International Trade Commission (2010), stated that definitions for SMEs vary within the USA; however, SMEs are defined in the U.S. as all enterprises with fewer than 500 employees.

## 2.2. The rationale of choosing SMEs as the centre point for this research

Before proceeding with analysing the literature associated with the social media adoption and maturity factors related to this sector, it is important to shed light on the rationale behind choosing SMEs as the focus of this study.

D'Imperio (2013) stated that SMEs' contribution to economies differs in each country; and while they play a significant role in high-income countries, they are also vital to low-income countries. Studies indicate that SMEs contribute up to 45% of employment and up to 33% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in developing economies (International Finance Corporation, 2010). According to Berry (2007) ‘It is proved that SMEs are vital to almost all economies around the world; however, they are more important especially in developing countries which face major employment and income distribution challenges’. Keskin and Senturk (2010) stated that current experimental studies revealed that SMEs contribute to more than 55% of GDP and more than 65% of the overall job creation in high-income countries. Also, SMEs and informal firms are responsible for more than 60% of GDP and more than 70% of the entire employment in low-income countries while they account for more than 95% of the total employment and around 70% of GDP in middle-income countries. Stockdale and Standing (2004) revealed that the contribution of SME sector to local economies is important as it is responsible for 80% of the international economic development. According to Acs and Yeung (1999) ‘Some recent



analysis and events suggest that a dynamic new and small firms sector is critical for growth in these markets. The small firm sector is a component that is necessary for enhanced economic well-being". According to Dalberg Global Development Advisors (2011), more than 95% of firms in the OECD region are considered SMEs which are responsible for about 60% of the private sector jobs and make a substantial contribution to innovation as well as supporting the domestic development and social unity. Moreover, in low-income countries, the SME sector makes a serious contribution to GDP as well as to job creation. The U.S. International Trade Commission (2010) revealed that SMEs contribute to the economy of the USA when it comes to job creation and entrepreneurship as SMEs made around 50% of U.S. non-agricultural GDP. The report stated that SMEs employment creation and contributions to the economy are mainly in the sectors of services, manufacturing & mining, as well as construction. According to the OECD (2018) "In the OECD area, SMEs represent almost the totality of the business population, account for about 70% of total employment and generate between 50% and 60% of value added, on average, SMEs contribute to more than one third of GDP in emerging and developing economies and account for 34% and 52% of formal employment respectively".

In the Middle East and North Africa region (MENA), Saleem (2013) stated that SMEs form a high share of the private sector employment where they are responsible for 10 to 40 percent of the total jobs in that region. Moreover, most enterprises in MENA region are MSMEs (Micro, small and medium sized enterprises) and they account for 80-90 percent of the overall businesses in these countries. Wymenga *et al.* (2012) argued that there is proof in the literature that SMEs engage in technological innovations in different sectors and that they are essential resources for jobs and productivity. In Saudi Arabia, Merdah and Sadi (2011) revealed that the growth of the national economy is one of the critical challenges the Saudi Government face together with other issues such as diversifying national income, less reliance on oil revenue,

job creation and building of skills. Table 2 summarises four main contributions of SMEs to the economy in most countries.

| SMEs main contribution to the economy   | Supporting literature  |
|---|--|
| <b>Job creation:</b> Neumark et al., (2008) examined different sectors within the economy of USA; the result showed that small firms create more employment chances. According to Kok et al., (2011) "For the EU as a whole, smaller firms contribute on a larger scale towards job creation than larger firms do, Net job creation rates decrease with each firm size class.". The authors state that SMEs contributed 85% of the overall jobs from 2002 to 2010. Also, SMEs have a much higher employment growth rate (1% per year) than large enterprises (0.5% per year). A study conducted by Gide Loyrette Nouel (2010) revealed that SMEs are a vital source of employment and that they are responsible for 67% of jobs in private non-financial sector and have surpassed larger companies by offering 9.4 million jobs from 2002 to 2008. | (Berry, 2007). (de Wit and de Kok, 2013). (Neumark et al., 2008). (OECD, 1997). (Dalberg Global Development Advisors, 2011). (Kok et al., 2011). (Ayyagari et al., 2011). (Wymenga et al., 2011). (Gide Loyrette Nouel, 2010). |
| <b>Generate Income:</b> According to Edinburgh, (2013) "The contribution of SMEs to economic fundamentals nonetheless varies substantially across countries: from 16% of GDP in low-income countries (where the sector is typically large but informal) to 51% of GDP in high-income countries".  | (Berry, 2007). (Edinburgh, 2013). (Dalberg Global Development Advisors, 2011).   |
| <b>Economic growth:</b> Gide Loyrette Nouel, (2010) states that many studies proved the connection between SMEs and general growth of an economy. Also, Stockdale and Standing, (2004) revealed that (SMEs) contribute significantly to local economies and are responsible for 80% of the international economic growth.   | (Stockdale and Standing, 2004). (Dalberg Global Development Advisors, 2011). (International Finance Cooperation, 2010). (Acs and Yeung, 1999). (Wymenga et al., 2011). Gide Loyrette Nouel (2010).                             |
| <b>Increase innovation:</b> Gide Loyrette Nouel, (2010) states that SMEs are usually innovative. While Jain and Chen, (2013) reveal that SMEs are significant drivers for innovation in the majority of countries.  | (Jain and Chen, 2013). (Dalberg Global Development Advisors, 2011). Gide Loyrette Nouel (2010).  |

Table 2 SMEs main contributions to economy

### 2.3. The impact of social media on SMEs

According to Duncan and Moriarty (1998) "Personal and social relationships became particularly important areas of study during the 80s". The authors explained that firms started to understand that communications and the relations with customers and stakeholders are the most important aspect because the brand relationships are a key determinant of brand value.

Also, the authors argued that besides the move to a relationship focus in marketing, other theoretical concepts are essential to communication and marketing, such as "exchange and transaction, the concept of channels, feedback, signs and signals as well as information". These dimensions help to identify the essential factors of a communication model of relationship marketing. Back in the early nineties, Webster (1992) suggested that marketing should change its focus from products and companies to individuals, organisations, and society. The author stated that the narrow portrayal of marketing as a short-term revenue improvement task seems outdated. He recognised the change as one that concentrates on relationship management instead of transaction management. 14 years later social media appeared, and ten years now it did what Webster suggested in marketing, social media changed the dynamics of marketing; it shifted the focus from the product to the consumer.

Eyrich *et al.* (2008) have drawn attention to the fact that the overall status of social media has moved from "buzz word" to a "strategic tool" and that is why it has captured the interest of researchers and professionals. Professionals create the expertise for better use of this digital communication technology while researchers develop frameworks to investigate the business value and test different factors in using social media in different situations. According to Taiminen and Karjaluoto (2015) "In social media, audiences do not expect sales pitches and marketing messages, but real information generated by conversations around the brand and authentic stories to be told. It is about creating value and managing customer relationships not attempting to directly drive sales".

According to Gilmore *et al.* (2007) some of the advantages for adopting e-marketing and web technologies by SMEs include the chance to decrease competitive disadvantages, the chance to reduce operational and marketing costs, the chance to better market their goods as well as to improve their general marketing communications mix. More advantages include the chance to boost sales as well as to carry out market research.

Salem and Murtada (2011) stated that it is frequently debated that social media revolution is contributing to the international economic growth. However, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) revealed that the benefits of using social media by SMEs are usually associated with improving communication with clients and creating relationships with them. The authors explain that business scenery might change because of the creation of new technologies that are available and affordable to smaller firms which generally could not use IT successfully. These new technologies propose more significant possibilities for using IT efficiently, and that is a vital driver for growing productivity in SMEs. Moreover, Kim et al., (2011) stated that Web 2.0, which includes social media networks, has offered new potentials for collaborations, communications and customer relationship management for SMEs, but the majority of these organisations have not entirely utilized these tools. Also, Remidez and Jones (2012) argued that it is predicted that the implementation of social media will grow and expand to other business functions within companies, as the strong point of social media comes from its capability to create significant relationships and trust with clients, trust and relationships are reasons for successful communications. De Saulles (2010) argued that the internet and the online advertising open up potential markets for SMEs to sell their products and services in a low-cost and efficient way compared to the traditional advertising channels (such as local newspapers and magazines). These conventional channels became less useful as potential customers turn to the web and search engines to find collaborations. Found that the fast interaction and the cost effectiveness are considered as a significant motive for adopting digital marketing for SMEs. According to a report by OECD (2018) "Digital technologies allow SMEs to improve market intelligence and access global markets and knowledge networks at relatively low cost. The digital transition facilitates the emergence of "born global" small businesses and provides new opportunities for SMEs to enhance their competitiveness in local and global markets, through product or service innovation and improved production processes". The report revealed that the

data and analytics offer various potentials for SMEs as they support these organisations in understanding their stakeholders' needs as well as the market. The same report also stated that “The digital technology can facilitate SMEs' access to skills and talent, outsourcing and online task hiring, as well as connection with knowledge partners. It can also facilitate access to a range of financing instruments. Mobile banking and online payments have had an important impact on traditional SME financing and digitalisation has allowed new financial services to emerge, with innovative solutions to address information asymmetries and collateral shortages”.

#### 2.4. The value of social media to SMEs

Numerous studies have examined the benefits associated with the use of social Media in SMEs. Van Scheers (2016) argued that a good use of social media could offer countless marketing prospects for SMEs. This interactive technology can improve branding, increase the exposure to companies and help create new business partnerships. According to Ahamat *et al.* (2017) an essential part of a marketing strategy in SMEs is adopting social media as it is considered cost-effective, can reach different targeted segments of consumers as well as the possibility to provide more leads and sales. Stockdale & Standing (2004) pointed out that the size of the firms allows SMEs to become adjustable and reactive to shifting circumstances than large firms, also, it enables SMEs to gain the advantage of the speed and flexibility that the digital atmosphere offers. Fillis *et al.* (2004) stated that smaller enterprises have the likelihood of attaining a competitive advantage by being faster and more flexible in connecting to the internet. Also, Remidez and Jones (2012) revealed that using social media within a company boosts the value of collaborations by dropping the cost of search and coordination, furthermore; social networks facilitate the access to knowledge, skills, and know-how. According to Lovett (2011) social media carries opportunities for businesses by providing metrics, insights and useful information that usually many traditional measurement technologies cannot deliver. Namankani *et al.*

(2014) stated that social media is a cost-effective communication tool, it affects word of mouth, increases traffic to the companies' websites and can support customer service.

The Arab Social Media report (2015) conducted by TNS in 9 countries in the Middle East including Saudi Arabia and UAE, revealed that the primary reasons for using social media in business are: to grow businesses, to enhance company's image, to advertise products & services directly to targeted markets, to recruit talents, to provide customer support and focus more on the consumer, to improve the processes related to functions like making orders and online selling, to innovate and to create new and broader markets.

Kim *et al.* (2011) pointed out that using social media in marketing helped increase the return on investment of marketing activities, generated customer's recommendations to their services and products and also enhanced the customer purchase rate. According to Riese *et al.* (2010) social media marketing offers valuable benefits. The authors explain that social media marketing usually focuses on creating brand awareness as well as communication and interaction with customers. The authors summarised the significant benefits of social media communities in marketing as brand awareness and exposure, generate traffic to company's main website, make new partnerships, increase ranking on the search engines, marketing leads and reduced marketing costs. Also, a study conducted by Constant Contact, Inc. (2012) with 700 SMEs in the UK revealed that 48 % of SMEs stated that social media is an excellent tool to produce word of mouth as well as referrals; while 47% believed social media is cost-effective. About 45% considered social media as a useful medium to communicate with existing and potential clients. Also, 45% stated that social media could support their companies' success. Taiminen and Karjaluoto (2015) revealed that the most common objective for using digital marketing in SMEs is to raise sales, other common goals include communicating and improving customer service, whereas, recruitment is the least common objective for using these channels.

According to McCann and Barlow (2015) the primary benefits gained by SMEs from using social media include improved brand awareness; enhanced communication with consumers; better marketing of products/services; and helped in creating business associations.

### 2.5. Social media obstacles in SMEs

A study conducted by Beier and Wagner (2016) with 278 Swiss SMEs found that the low adoption of social media in these SMEs revealed a high perceived risk and low perceived usefulness of social media. The authors explained that a lot of managers were still not sure about the benefits of social media concerning performance, progress, and cost-effectiveness.

Most studies indicate that SMEs face challenges related to technology, access to foreign markets, marketing skills and limited resources. Jones and Borgman (2015) pointed out that as social media marketing requires time and expertise, SMEs on the other hand suffer from a lack of resources that include staff, finance, and time, which affects their success in using these interactive technologies. The authors stated that social media training plays a role in supporting SMEs overcome their limited skills and resources. According to OECD (2018) “To date, a large number of SMEs have not been able to reap the benefits of the technological transition also due to limited adoption of digital technologies due to lack of investment in complementary knowledge-based assets, such as R&D, human resources, organisational changes and process innovation, and this lag has implications for their capacity to turn technological change into innovation and productivity growth. Furthermore, SMEs face specific challenges in managing digital security and privacy risks, mainly due to lack of awareness, resources and expertise to assess and manage risk effectively”.

De Saulles (2010) stated that some critical issues small companies usually confront are dedicating time and developing the know-how to integrate appropriate and helpful technologies into their daily workflow. According to the European Commission (2005) SMEs face market flaws regularly as they have complications most of the time in getting capital or credit mostly

during the early start-up stage. The report revealed that their limited resources can lower their adoption to new technologies and innovation. Hughes (1998) pointed out that it is common to view access to technology, market demand as well as finances as external obstacles, and to consider management, staff as well as marketing skills as internal restrictions

According to Eyrych *et al.* (2008) "If SMEs ignore e-marketplaces some problems can result; marketplaces present a significant threat to SMEs since they increase competition and leave non-participants vulnerable to those adopting firms". Fillis *et al.* (2004) examined different factors that affect e-business growth in small companies; they revealed that there are variations in approach towards adopting e-business between large and small firms; one of the reasons is because main owner or manager characteristics do not exist in larger companies. They also explained that one of the barriers towards the adoption of e-business technologies in small companies is the fact that the company and the managerial roles become one as a result of the high level of control made by the primary decision maker in these enterprises. They have also drawn the attention to some macro and micro level factors that affected e-business implementation and the progress in smaller firms; these factors are globalisation, technology, external and internal owner/manager obstacles, capability and entrepreneurial issues. AlGhamdi *et al.* (2011) stated that lots of companies around the world have adopted e-commerce platforms as part of their operations as they seek the benefits that online marketplaces can provide. Taiminen and Karjaluo (2015) found that the major obstacles to broader use of digital marketing in SMEs comprise the lack of financial resources, doubts about how to use digital tools and finding the right staff to manage the digital marketing in the company.

## 2.6. SMEs and social media in Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia has the biggest economy in the Gulf Cooperation Council (Capitas Group International, 2014). According to (Orient Planet Research, 2016) "Saudi Arabia is ranked first



in Arab World in GDP with USD 753 billion, backed by oil-based economy accounting for around 20 percent of global reserves".

Global Media Insight (2018) revealed that social media plays a significant role in the Saudi Arabian society. And with its rapid expanding use, social media became a powerful force for social change. Furthermore, the Saudi Government has also been using social media efficiently to interact with the public and to measure the society's consciousness. The social media penetration rate in Saudi Arabia as of 2017 according to Statista (2017) is as follows: WhatsApp is the most popular social network with 71% penetration rate. Followed by YouTube with 71%, Facebook with 66%, Instagram with 54% twitter with 52%, snapchat with 39%, google + with 32%, LinkedIn 24% and Pinterest with 16%. Saudi Arabia has the biggest number of Snapchat users in the middles East according to Radcliffe and Lam (2018) "The app is especially popular in Saudi Arabia with anywhere between 7 million<sup>30</sup> and 8.2 million daily users meaning that about 21% to 25% of the Saudi population use it each day". The authors revealed that Saudi Arabia is largest market for YouTube internationally as it has "The highest YouTube watch time per capita of any country in the world". Moreover, it tops the MENA region in using Twitter.

According to Hootsuite (2017), the total number of the population in Saudi Arabia is 32.45 million. The number of internet users is 22.29 million which means 70% penetration rate. The number of active social media users is 19 million with 59% penetration while the number of active mobile social users is 16 million with 49% penetration. Statista (2017) revealed that there is an increasing use of social media and technology in the country generally due to the low average age of the population, of which 50% are under the age of 27 (Index mundi, 2018).

The definition of SMEs defers between different official organisations within Saudi Arabia. Alsaleh (2012) reveals that "A small enterprise is the one with less than 20 employees, while a

medium size enterprise is the one with 21 to 100 employees". On the other hand, for the Saudi Arabian General Investment Authority (SAGIA), a small enterprise is the one with less than 60 employees while a medium size firm is the one with less than 100 employees.

According to Namankani *et al.* (2014), SMEs constitute about 95% of the entire number of enterprises in Saudi Arabia. Outski (2002) stated that they account for 14% of the overall business productivity. The author states that SMEs contribute about 8% to the total percentage of goods exportation and they are considered the most prominent sector in the Kingdom. The oil sector is responsible for 61% of GDP in Saudi Arabia (SME Advisor Arabia, 2015) whereas SMEs account for only 20% of GDP according to the Small and Medium Enterprises General Authority in Saudi Arabia (2018). Also, SMEs account for 25% of total employment in the country; this low contribution is the opposite of the majority of developed nations (Capitas Group International, 2014). Flow 21 (2010) revealed that Saudi Arabian enterprises have gone through remarkable growth during the last years, specifically the micro-small enterprises. They indicate that this sector represents 45.5% of total enterprises at the end of 2009, while small firms constitute 42%. These data show that the majority of enterprises in Saudi Arabia belong to the SMEs sector based on the number of employees.

Supporting SMEs in Saudi Arabia can solve some economic and social problems (SME Advisor Arabia, 2015) as SMEs hold opportunities such as employment creation, diversification of national income sources, reducing poverty rate and contributing to the development of local skills and technology. Namankani *et al.* (2014) pointed out that even though internet penetration in SMEs rose from 66% in 2007 to 81% in 2009 and the internet prices are affordable, yet the use of social media is not advanced in Saudi companies. The authors cited reasons for this low maturity which includes low awareness of the value of social

media to businesses as well as the absence of systematic guidance on how to use these affordable solutions in the market.

According to Shalaby (2004), some of the significant issues Saudi Arabian SMEs face include the lack of one unified definition to SMEs, the shortage of skilled labour in marketing and technology, the lack of fund, the lack of information as well as the lack of policy and regulations. According to a study conducted by Al-Hudhaif and Alkubeyyer (2011) aiming at assessing e-commerce adoption factors in Saudi Arabia, the investigation revealed that among the top 92 Saudi companies questioned, only 6.5 % of companies are non-adopters, 42.4% are initial adopters whereas 51.1% are institutional adopters. The study also identified some dimensions that affect the adoption of e-commerce in Saudi Arabia; these dimensions include organisation, environment, innovation, and management. The same survey also revealed that the environmental aspects would affect the early adoption of e-commerce in Saudi Arabia more than the other factors. Al-Somali *et al.* (2011) explained that it is agreed that theories and organisational practices created in developed countries must be re-tested before applied in developing countries, as they might not be suitable in a different cultural and economic background. The authors also pointed out that the main problems related to e-commerce adoption in developing countries include slow Internet speeds, the high cost of Internet service providers and the poor infrastructure; while in developed countries the problems include privacy and taxes. The authors mentioned that cultural differences and the approach towards (ICT) as well as the economic state of a country can influence the implementation of e-commerce.

After exploring the impact, value and obstacles of using social media in SMEs as well as investigating the context of using these interactive technologies in Saudi Arabia, the next

section will review the relevant technology adoption theories and existing social media adoption models.

## 2.7. Technology adoption theories

It is necessary to review the theories related to technology adoption since it is the essence of the current study. There are different theories related to technology adoption in the literature, table 3 summarises these theories with their proposed constructs. Reviewing the technology adoption theories helps identify the principal dimensions and factors related to social media adoption and use which will form the theoretical base of the first study in this research.

| Theories  | Constructs   |
|---|--|
| Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) Theory by Rogers, (1962).                                   | The features that control the degree of an innovation's adoption are:<br>1) Relative advantage<br>2) Compatibility<br>3) Complexity<br>4) Trialability<br>5) Observability to people in a social system.   |
| Theory of reasoned action by Ajzen & Fishbein, (1980).                                    | Proposes 2 factors that controls intention:<br>1) Attitudes: someone` opinion about whether behaviour is positive or negative.<br>2) Subjective norms: perceived social pressure stemming from someone`s perception<br>(Coleman et al., 2011)  |
| Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by Davis, (1989).                                       | It suggests 2 factors that influence the attitude of users:<br>1) Perceived usefulness: The extent of how a person believes that using a certain system would improve their work performance.<br>2) Perceived ease of use: The extent of how a person believes that using a certain system would be without effort.  |
| Technology, Organisation, Environment framework (TOE) by Tornatzky and Fleischer, (1990). | 3 Dimensions and 9 factors<br>1) Organisation: Formal & informal linking structure, size, communication process, slack<br>2) Technology: Availability and Characteristics<br>3) Environment: industry characteristic and market structure, technology support infrastructure, Government regulations   |
| The Theory of Planned Behaviour by Ajzen, (1991).   | “It is considered an extension to the theory of Reasoned Action. Proposes 3 independent reasons for intention.<br>1) Attitude toward the behaviour: the extent to which a person has a favourable or unfavourable evaluation or appraisal of the behaviour in question<br>2) Subjective norm: refers to the perceived social pressure to perform or not to perform the behaviour |

|   |   |
|---|---|
|   | 3) Perceived behavioural control: which refers to the perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behaviour”. (Ajzen 1991).  |
| The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) by Venkatesh <i>et al.</i> (2003). | Constructs includes:<br>1) Performance expectancy,<br>2) Effort expectancy<br>3) Social influence<br>4) Facilitating conditions<br>“With moderators of gender, age, experience, and voluntariness of use ultimately influencing technology adoption intentions”. (Dahnil <i>et al.</i> 2014). |

Table 3 Summary of relevant technology adoption theories

## 2.8. Existing technology adoption models

Table 4 presents a summary of existing technology adoption models which were based on the technology adoption theories discussed in the previous section.

| Models   | Dimensions & Factors  |
|--|---|
| Technology Acceptance model by Davis <i>et al.</i> (1989).                                       | 2 factors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived usefulness of technology</li> <li>• Perceived ease of use of technology</li> </ul>  |
| TOE Framework (Organisation, Technology, and Environment) by Tomatzky and Fleischer (1990).      | 3 Dimensions and 9 factors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisation: Formal &amp; informal linking structure, size, communication process, slack</li> <li>• Technology: Availability and Characteristics</li> <li>• Environment: industry characteristic and market structure, technology support infrastructure, Government regulations</li> </ul>  |
| Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) adoption in Small firms model by Iacovou <i>et al.</i> (1995). | 3 Dimensions and 2 factors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived Benefits of innovation</li> <li>• Organisational Readiness: Financial resources, IT resources</li> <li>• External Pressure</li> </ul>   |
| Key ICT adoption attributes in SMEs, by Van Akkeren and Cavaye (1999).                           | 3 Dimensions and 14 factors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Owner manager characteristics: Perceived benefits, computer literacy, Assertiveness, perceived control, subjective norm, mistrust of ICT industry, Lack of time</li> <li>• Small firm characteristics: Organisational readiness, external pressure to adopt, customer supplier dependency, structural sophistication of the firm, Size, sector, status, Information intensity</li> </ul> |
| Exploring SME Internet Adoption: Towards a Contingent Model by Levy and Powell (2003).           | 4 factors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived value: Business opportunity, perceived benefits, Owner's knowledge of IT, Competitive pressure</li> </ul>  |
| Adoption of technological innovations in an organisation model by Shemi (2012).                  | 4 Dimension and 22 factors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual factors: Owner/Manager characteristics, level of education, level of ICT and E-commerce knowledge, social and cultural issues</li> <li>• Organisational factors: Security, trust, and privacy concerns, financial ability and cost implications, size of the organisation, perceived benefits of ICT, organisational culture</li> </ul>  |

|   |   |
|---|---|
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technological factors: Availability and slow speed internet, complexity of technology, lack of payment facilities, lack of reliable power supply, language barrier, lack of internet address space</li> <li>• Environmental factors: Government support, business partner affiliation, the nature and characteristic of value chain, economic and political instability and human rights issues, natural disasters, floods &amp; earthquakes, business culture, macro-economic policies</li> </ul> |
| Evaluating readiness of organisations to adopt social media for competitive advantage. By Omosigbo and Abeysinghe (2012). | 3 Dimensions and 6 factors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technology: Technology competence</li> <li>• Environment: Target audience</li> <li>• Organisation: Cultures, goals, definitive SM metrics, monitoring strategy, align goals with existing strategy.</li> </ul>  |
| Adoption and Use of Social Media in Small and Medium-sized Enterprises by Meske, and Stieglitz (2013).                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient support of SM</li> <li>• Poor Effectiveness and Efficiency</li> <li>• Lack of Resources</li> <li>• Issues of Corporate Culture</li> </ul>   |
| Exploring social media adoption in small to medium-sized enterprises in Ireland by Durkin <i>et al.</i> (2013).           | 3 Dimensions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Company assessment: Resources, competencies, capabilities, culture, attitude, network orientation.</li> <li>• Context assessment: Market, segment, competitor, environment.</li> <li>• Consumer assessment: buyer behaviour, demographics, technology orientation, location</li> </ul>   |
| Social media readiness in public administrations framework by Hoffmann <i>et al.</i> (2014).                              | 2 Dimension and 12 factors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual: Demographics/ age, Experience, Performance expectancy / perceived benefits, Effort expectancy/ lack of time, Social influence/ competition, Self-Efficacy/ perceived self-efficacy for ICT tech, Computer Anxiety/ privacy and security concerns</li> <li>• Organisational: Leadership Support, Autonomy or work discretion, Structure, Processes/ Hierarchy and bureaucracy, Resources/ IT capabilities</li> </ul>   |

Table 4 Technology adoption models in companies

## 2.9. The proposed social media adoption factors selected for the current research

Based on the literature analysis related to social media adoption, 10 social media adoption factors were identified from the literature and will be used in the current research. Table 5 presents definitions to the social media adoption factors that the current study will use in the survey.

| Dimensions & Factors                            | Definitions | Supporting references |
|---|-------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Organisational dimension for SM adoption</b> |             |                       |

|                                  |   |   |
|----------------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Perceived usefulness</b>      | "The degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance". (Davis, 1989)  | Davis, Bagozzi, Warshaw, (1989). Ahamat <i>et al.</i> (2017). Hoffmann <i>et al.</i> (2014). Van Akkeren and Cavaye (1999). Levy and Powell (2003). El-Gohary (2012). Iacovou <i>et al.</i> (1995). |
| <b>Perceived ease of use</b>     | "The degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free from effort" (Davis, 1989)  | Davis, Bagozzi, Warshaw (1989). Ahamat <i>et al.</i> (2017). Hoffmann <i>et al.</i> (2014). Van Akkeren and Cavaye (1999). Levy and Powell (2003). El-Gohary (2012).                                |
| <b>Management commitment</b>     | "The support of the top management within the SMEs will lead to successful E-Marketing adoption." (El-Gohary, 2012).<br>"Commitment from the organisation to support social media is a must-have; organisations that engage in social media without backing from the business will continually struggle." (Lovett, 2011). | Meske and Stieglitz (2013). Hoffmann <i>et al.</i> (2014). Tarafdar and Vaidya (2006). Uzoka and Seleka (2007). El-Gohary (2012). Lovett (2011).  |
| <b>Corporate goals</b>           | "The degree to which an innovation is perceived as being consistent with the existing values, needs and past experiences of potential adopters" (El-Gohary, 2012).<br>"Aligning core business goals a company is trying to accomplish with the social media objectives." (Kelly, 2013).                                   | Omosigho and Abeysinghe (2012). El-Gohary (2012). Kelly (2012).   |
| <b>Knowledge/Skills/training</b> | The availability of the knowledge and skills related to social media in the company.<br>"Investing in staff training is considered crucial to a successful e-business implementation and practice in smaller firms." (Kim <i>et al.</i> 2011).  | Durkin <i>et al.</i> (2013). Omosigho & Abeysinghe (2012). Shemi (2012). Hoffmann <i>et al.</i> (2014). Levy and Powell (2003). Meske and Stieglitz (2013). Kim <i>et al.</i> (2011).               |
| <b>Resources/Budget</b>          | "The accessibility and availability of sufficient resources could be one of the very important factors in adopting E-Marketing by SBEs" (El-Gohary, 2012).<br>The lack of essential resources for social media implementation in the company can affect its success" (Hoffmann <i>et al.</i> , 2014).                     | Meske and Stieglitz (2013). Hoffmann <i>et al.</i> (2014). Iacovou <i>et al.</i> (1995). Shemi (2012). Durkin <i>et al.</i> (2013). El-Gohary (2012).   |
| <b>Technological dimension</b>   |   |   |
| <b>Infrastructure</b>            | "The lack of technical expertise, and the lack of compatibility between current technical infrastructures, are considered barriers to e-business adoption in SMEs." (Abid <i>et al.</i> 2011).  | Shemi (2012). Tomatzky and Fleischer (1990). Abid <i>et al.</i> (2011).   |

| <b>Environmental dimension</b>         |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <b>Sector</b>                          | "An area of the economy in which businesses share the same or a related product or service". (Investopedia, 2003).   | Tomatzky and Fleischer (1990). Van Akkeren and Cavaye (1999). Durkin <i>et al.</i> (2013).  |
| <b>Competitive pressure</b>            | "Once certain organisations have adopted ICTs, such as social media, others may jump on the bandwagon and feel pressured to also adopt the new technology, even when they might not see its immediate advantage." (Hoffmann <i>et al.</i> , 2014).<br>"ICT adoption was on the basis of the perceived benefits and driven by pressure from customers, guests, competitors, employees and technology suppliers" (Mpofu <i>et al.</i> , 2013). | Van Akkeren and Cavaye (1999). Levy and Powell (2003). Iacovou <i>et al.</i> (1995). Durkin <i>et al.</i> (2013). Tomatzky and Fleischer (1990). Hoffmann <i>et al.</i> (2014). |
| <b>Consumer social media readiness</b> | "The propensity to embrace and use new social media and related technologies for accomplishing goals in private and professional contexts". Olsen and Andreassen (2014). "ICT "readiness" is often associated with users' competencies, their propensity to trust and their technology acceptance" (Hoffmann <i>et al.</i> 2014).<br>"Customers attitude towards E-Marketing related activities." (El-Gohary, 2012).                         | Durkin <i>et al.</i> (2013). Omosigbo & Abeyasinghe, 2012). Olsen and Andreassen (2014). Hoffmann <i>et al.</i> (2014). El-Gohary (2012).                                       |

Table 5 Definitions of the adoption factors used in research activity B

- [Social media objectives of companies](#)

Table 6 presents the social media objectives that companies mentioned in previous studies and which will be used in the current research.

| <b>Social media objectives</b>              | <b>Supporting references</b>  |
|---|---|
| To create exposure to the company's website | Riese <i>et al.</i> (2010). Constant Contact Inc. (2012). Lovett (2011).  |
| To engage with consumers                    | Kaplan and Haenlein, (2010), Kim <i>et al.</i> (2011) Lovett (2011). McCann and Barlow (2015).                    |
| To generate leads                           | Kim <i>et al.</i> (2013). Riese <i>et al.</i> (2010). Constant Contact Inc. (2012). Taiminen and Karjaluo (2015). |
| To create brand awareness                   | Lovett (2011). Social Media report (2015) by TNS. McCann and Barlow (2015).                                       |
| To facilitate support of customers          | Lovett (2011). Social Media report (2015) by TNS. Taiminen and Karjaluo (2015).                                   |
| To reach target consumers                   | Lovett (2011). Social Media report (2015) by TNS. McCann and Barlow (2015).                                       |

Table 6 Summary of social media objectives in research activity B



- [Benefits of using social media to businesses](#)

Table 7 presents the benefits that companies gained through using social media in previous studies and which will be used in the survey with Saudi SMEs.

| Benefits   | Supporting references   |
|--|---|
| Increased exposure to the company                | Van Scheers (2016). Riese <i>et al.</i> (2010). Constant Contact Inc. (2012). McCann and Barlow (2015).   |
| Reduced marketing expenses                       | Ahamat <i>et al.</i> (2017). Van Scheers (2016). Remidez and Jones (2012), Riese <i>et al.</i> (2010). Gilmore <i>et al.</i> (2007). Taiminen and Karjaluo (2015). McCann and Barlow (2015). OECD (2018). |
| Generated leads                                  | Ahamat <i>et al.</i> (2017). Kim <i>et al.</i> (2013). Riese <i>et al.</i> (2010). Constant Contact Inc. (2012). McCann and Barlow (2015).  |
| Improved sales                                   | Ahamat <i>et al.</i> (2017). Van Scheers (2016). Gilmore <i>et al.</i> (2007). De Saulles (2010). McCann and Barlow (2015).   |
| Increased traffic to the main website            | Riese <i>et al.</i> (2010). Namankani <i>et al.</i> (2014). McCann and Barlow (2015).   |
| Increased number of loyal customers              | Haenlein (2010). McCann and Barlow (2015).  |
| Helped growing business partnerships             | Riese <i>et al.</i> (2010). Kim <i>et al.</i> , (2011). Van Scheers (2016). McCann and Barlow (2015). OECD (2018).  |
| Provided the company with marketplace insights   | Lovett (2011). Gilmore <i>et al.</i> (2007). Namankani <i>et al.</i> (2014). McCann and Barlow (2015). OECD (2018).   |
| Improved the company's ranking on search engines | Riese <i>et al.</i> (2010).   |

Table 7 Summary of social media benefits used in research activity B

- [Obstacles to success in using social media](#)

Table 8 shows the obstacles that companies face when working on social media from previous studies which will be part of the survey with Saudi SMEs.

| Obstacles   | Supporting references   |
|---|---|
| Lack of time  | De Saulles (2010). Jones and Borgman (2015)   |
| No technological infrastructure that supports social media in the company | Tornatzky and Fleisher (1990). Hajli <i>et al.</i> (2012).  |
| Lack of skills and knowledge in using social media                        | De Saulles (2010). Hughes (1998). Taiminen and Karjaluo (2015). Jones and Borgman (2015). OECD (2018).              |
| No dedicated team to work on social media                                 | Hughes (1998). Lovett (2011). Taiminen and Karjaluo (2015). Jones and Borgman (2015).                               |
| Saudi consumers are not ready   | Durkin <i>et al.</i> (2013). Lovett (2011). Van Akkeren and Cavaye (1999).  |
| Lack of resources / budget to spend on social media activities            | The European Commission (2005). Hughes (1998). Taiminen and Karjaluo (2015). Jones and Borgman (2015). OECD (2018). |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Lack of management support                                | Fillis <i>et al.</i> (2004). Hoffmann <i>et al.</i> (2014). OECD (2018).   |
| Social media is not useful for my business                | Davis, Bagozi and Warshaw (1989). Hoffmann <i>et al.</i> (2014). Beier and Wagner (2016). OECD (2018).   |
| No external competition                                   | Hoffmann <i>et al.</i> (2014). Van Akkeren and Cavaye (1999). Levy <i>et al.</i> (2003). Iacovou <i>et al.</i> (1995). Gibbs <i>et al.</i> (2007). |
| No clear strategy to follow                               | Holloman (2014). Lovett (2011). Kelly (2013). Chaffey and Simms (2015). Schottmuller (2013). Taiminen and Karjaluo (2015).                         |
| No measurement to the social media activities and efforts | Lovett (2011). Kelly (2013). Holloman (2014). Taiminen and Karjaluo (2015). OECD (2018).   |

Table 8 Obstacles to success in using social media

## 2.10. Social media maturity in business

Most of the studies related to using social media in business mostly discussed the readiness and the adoption of social media or other internet technologies. There are a limited number of studies that assess the maturity of using social media in a corporate body. According to Camiade and Claisse (2011) maturity models demonstrate the main stages of business progress when it is faced with some problems, these models let the company assesses its current situation and to plan to progress.

One of the few existing models is the social media maturity model by the M&I/Partners (2011). The model aims at determining in what stage an organisation is regarding its use of social media. The model specifies different 'maturity phases' an organisation may go through. This model presents four stages of maturity which are: 1) Ad Hoc: Employees use social media for their own goals, no strategy or policy for using social media is developed at this stage. 2) Experimental: some departments in the company use social media. At this stage, there is a need for social media strategy and policy. There is also no process in place.

3) Functional: at this stage, social media is used for specific purposes, it is also used in some marketing campaigns, there is cooperation in company processes, and social media policy is developed. 4) Transformation: At this stage social media is fully integrated into the strategy

and processes of the organisation; the company finds new means to add value using social media, and social media strategy is created and employed.

From the first phase to the second "need" is developed for social media, from the second phase to the third "integration" is happening, whereas from the third phase to the fourth a "transformation" happens. We can identify 4 criteria used in this model to judge the maturity of using social media, which are: Social media objectives, strategy, policy and finally a process.

However, the model neither included social media measurement nor used listening tools as maturity criteria even though "measurement" is considered a crucial element in social media success. According to Lovett (2011) getting involved with social media must contain a measurement approach "Responsible business develops an understanding of social media effectiveness using measurement."

Another social media maturity model is by Forrester Research Inc., (2011) which according to Bosomworth, (2012) has recognised six main growth criteria: 1) Experience: which includes implementing technologies and document it and distributing the learning through the business. 2) Resources: skills of staff and responsibilities should evolve with the company. 3) Process: involves planning the tasks for how to manage the tools, how to handle social media, and integrate social tools into the business processes. 4) Measurement: involves data collection, analysis and aligning social media to business goals; 5) Commitment of top management. 6) Culture: senior management arranges the social priorities. We can see that this maturity model includes measurement as one of the criteria for social media maturity.

Another work by Camiade and Claisse (2011), who proposed a maturity model for social media marketing which is based on 4 main stages towards progress through a pyramid structure. These stages of maturity consist of Beginner, Junior, Senior, and Expert level. The authors state that progressing from level to another consists of meeting different criteria. These criteria are

grouped into two categories as follows: the Operational level requirements include the type and content of the mission, measuring the results and ROI, and the tools used. Whereas the Management level requirements includes supporting the project and the team, having a strategy with objectives, budget, and human resources. The authors explained that the company's level of maturity is associated with the level of each of these requirements.

The authors, Camiade and Claisse (2011), pointed out that evaluating the overall company's maturity level based on this model can't be a total or an average, which means the maturity level should be measured for every criterion by giving them values. For example, 0= beginner, 1= junior, 2= senior and 3= expert, then use the radar chart to represent the results of the evaluation. The authors explain that "because a business can meet different levels of criteria using the principle of the weakest link (which determines the resistance of the overall chain). The lowest level determines the phase of maturity, and the objective will be to obtain a similar score for all of the criteria". This model provides maturity criteria that include measurement; it is also the only model that presents a calculation method to determine the overall maturity. However, we argue that this proposed calculation does not reflect the real maturity stage of a company because it does not take in consideration the high scores a company achieved and will judge anyway by the lowest score. Therefore, we believe that there are better ways to calculate the maturity.

### 2.11. Summary of existing social media maturity models

Table 9 presents an overview of existing social media maturity models in the literature along with the proposed constructs of each model. These models were created for different purposes, Schumacher *et al.* (2016) developed a maturity model assessing industry 4.0 readiness and maturity of manufacturing enterprises covering nine dimensions. Another study is by Lehmkuhl *et al.* (2013) titled "Towards a Maturity Model for the Adoption of Social Media as a Means of Organisational Innovation" which includes five dimensions. Cohen (2013) also developed a

marketing maturity model for SMEs comprises five criteria and four stages. Besides, M&I Partners (2011) created a maturity model that contains four stages of maturity. Another model is The Maturity Model Social Media Marketing by Camiade and Claisse (2011) which included seven criteria and four levels of maturity.

| <b>Maturity models</b>  | <b>Constructs</b>  |
|---|--|
| A Maturity Model for Assessing Industry 4.0 Readiness and Maturity of Manufacturing Enterprises by Schumacher <i>et al.</i> (2016). | 9 dimensions: Strategy, Leadership, Customers, Products, Operations, Culture, People, Governance, Technology.  |
| The Maturity Model Social Media Marketing by Camiade and Claisse (2011).  | 7 criteria: Mission, Measurement, Tools, Support, Strategy, Budget, HR<br>4 stages of maturity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beginner</li> <li>• Junior</li> <li>• Expert</li> <li>• Senior</li> </ul>   |
| Towards a Maturity Model for the Adoption of Social Media as a Means of Organisational Innovation by Lehmkuhl <i>et al.</i> (2013). | 5 dimensions and 17 sub-dimensions<br>Strategy, Governance, Processes and Organisation, Systems, Culture.  |
| The SMEs marketing maturity model by Cohen (2013).  | 5 Criteria: Strategy, Resources, Budget, Technology, Results<br>4 stages of maturity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiated</li> <li>• Defined</li> <li>• Managed</li> <li>• Optimised</li> </ul>   |
| M&I/Partners (2011).  | 4 stages of maturity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ad hoc: No strategy, no policy, an employee involved,</li> <li>• Experimental: Some divisions in the company involved. Developing need for social media strategy and policy. No structure for answering &amp; reporting</li> <li>• Functional: Social media applied for specific purposes. Borders fade between divisions. Social media is used in some campaigns. Social media policy formulated. Structure for answering &amp; responding established.</li> <li>• Transformation: social media strategy established.</li> </ul> |

**Table 9 Summary of existing maturity models**

### 2.12. The social media maturity criteria that will be adapted for this research

Based on the literature analysis of the social media maturity models in the previous sections, seven maturity criteria were selected for the maturity assessment model which will be proposed by the current research to measure the maturity (success) of using social media in SMEs. These criteria are:

- **Management commitment:**

According to El-Gohary (2012) "The support of the top management within the SMEs will lead to successful E-Marketing adoption". While Lovett (2011) states that "Commitment from the organisation to support social media is a must-have; companies that engage in social media without backing from the business will continually struggle".

- **Budget:**

The amount of financial budget dedicated to social media marketing in the company. According to El-Gohary (2012) "The accessibility and availability of sufficient resources could be one of the very important factors in adopting E-Marketing by SMEs". Hoffmann *et al.* (2014) reveal that "The lack of essential resources for social media implementation affects the success of using social media in companies".

- **Strategy:**

"Strategy is who you are targeting and what you want to achieve" Kelly (2012). According to Lovett (2011) "Social media need to portray a clear plan for what your company is doing and why, a sound social media strategy will provide validation for your social media activities and a reference point to keep your company on track".

- **Policy:**

According to Field and Chelliah (2012) "A social-media policy must be part of a coordinated and properly documented human-resource management strategy". Lovett (2011) states that "As social media becomes accessible to many within your corporate environment, there must be a common understanding of what is acceptable and what is not, for that reason, a corporate social

media policy is a must-have for any organisation". According to OECD (2018) "Policy can play a role in ensuring that SMEs reap the benefits of increased digitalisation. While affordable and widespread coverage of digital networks is essential, targeted policies can help diffuse digital technologies to SMEs and enable their effective use, while addressing related risks".

- **Measurement:**

According to Larson and Watson (2011) "Without the ability to define and measure the consequences of social media strategies, it is difficult for firms to align their social media initiatives with organisational goals and ultimately create business value". McCann and Barlow (2015) states that "There is a need for SMEs to adopt a transparent, standardised yet flexible measurement framework. "Without a set of measurable results, there is no proof that the technologies were well chosen and efficiently employed".

According to Lovett (2011) "There are some common elements that are shared across social analytics; these include collecting data, performing analysis, reporting results and driving actions. You need data as a starting point to begin your analysis. From there you draw insights and formulate hypothesis, and this leads to providing recommendations and taking actions that will ultimately benefit your business and your customers. Also, he states that "Each campaign can be measured as an individual project and evaluated on its own performance over time or against comparative campaigns. This allows you to have a definitive time for data analysis and enables you to learn from and improve on each measurement campaign".

- **Tools:**

According to Rouse (2013) "Social media analytics is the practice of gathering data from blogs and social media websites and analysing that data to make business decisions. The most common use of social media analytics is to mine customer sentiment in order to support marketing and customer service activities". According to OECD (2018) "Analytics provide a wide range of opportunities for SMEs, enabling a better understanding of the processes within the firm, the needs of their clients and partners, and the overall business environment".

- **Process:**

(Lovett, 2011) states that "Measurement requires a chain of individuals because effective measurement originates from strategy and then flows through management process to operations; from there measurement is embedded within execution and evaluated across all stages of the initiative" He also states that "Process dictates how measures are created, how they are socialised and shared and how they're implemented within organisation. Further, process ensures that all efforts are measured and that they support the strategic initiatives set forth by the organisation. Process brings together the appropriate stakeholders to ensure that programs can be evaluated in a business context".

The next section will present the proposed maturity levels of the 7 maturity criteria identified above.

### The proposed social media maturity levels

Four stages of organisational maturity in social media were identified from the literature analysis of social media maturity. These stages are based on the seven maturity criteria discussed in the previous section. These stages of social media maturity are essential in measuring the overall organisational maturity in using social media. Each stage will be assigned a score, for example level one of any criteria will be given score 1, level 2 will be given score 2 etc.

Table 10 presents the specifications of the four levels of maturity based on the seven criteria identified earlier in this research.

| Criteria                     | Level 1   | Level 2   | Level 3  | Level 4   |
|------------------------------|---|---|--|---|
| <b>Management commitment</b> | Individual support (Camiade and Claisse, 2011). (M&I/Partners, 2011)                    | Mid-management support (Camiade and Claisse, 2011).       | Top-management support (Camiade and Claisse, 2011).                                  | Social media oriented company. (Camiade and Claisse, 2011).                     |
| <b>Budget</b>                | No budget dedicated for social media. (Camiade and Claisse, 2011). (M&I/Partners, 2011) | Random, insignificant budget (Camiade and Claisse, 2011). | Adequate, unstable budget (Camiade and Claisse, 2011). (Medium budget) (Cohen, 2013) | Dedicated stable budget (Camiade and Claisse, 2011). (Big budget) (Cohen, 2013) |



|                    |   |  |  |  |
|--------------------|---|--|--|--|
|                    |   | (Small budget)<br>(Cohen, 2013)<br>(M&I/Partners,<br>2011)   | (M&I/Partners,<br>2011)  | (M&I/Partners,<br>2011)  |
| <b>Strategy</b>    | No specific objectives/strategy in managing social media (Camiade and Claisse, 2011).               | Operational objectives & tactics. (Camiade and Claisse, 2011). There is a need for strategy (M&I/Partners, 2011) | Specific strategy for social media that follows specific objectives (Camiade and Claisse, 2011).               | Integrated social media strategy within the overall marketing strategy (Camiade and Claisse, 2011).      |
| <b>Policy</b>      | No policy (M&I/Partners, 2011)  | There is a need for a policy (M&I/Partners, 2011)  | There is a generic social media policy developed (M&I/Partners, 2011)  | Advanced social media policy (M&I/Partners, 2011)  |
| <b>Measurement</b> | No measurement (Camiade and Claisse, 2011). (salesforce.com, inc., 2013)                            | Raw data measurement (Camiade and Claisse, 2011). (salesforce.com, inc., 2013)                                   | KPI measurement (Camiade and Claisse, 2011). (salesforce.com, inc., 2013)                                      | Dashboards (Camiade and Claisse, 2011). (salesforce.com, inc., 2013)                                     |
| <b>Tools</b>       | No tools used for measurement. (Camiade and Claisse, 2011). (salesforce.com, inc., 2013)            | Checking basic social media alerts (Camiade and Claisse, 2011). salesforce.com, inc., 2013)                      | Using free listening and analysing tools (salesforce.com, inc., 2013)  | Paid listening and analysing tools, Dashboards (Camiade and Claisse, 2011). (salesforce.com, inc., 2013) |
| <b>Process</b>     | No process in managing and delivering social media (M&I/Partners, 2011) salesforce.com, inc., 2013) | Group of employees only (salesforce.com, inc., 2013)   | There is cooperation in social media processes in the company (M&I/Partners, 2011) salesforce.com, inc., 2013) | Social media is integrated within the company's process (M&I/Partners, 2011) salesforce.com, inc., 2013) |

Table 10 proposed social media maturity criteria

### 2.13. Consumers' social media readiness for corporate social media accounts

According to the Arab Knowledge Economy report (2016) which was launched by Orient Planet, it is expected that the internet users' number in the Middles East will increase to around 226 million by 2018; the same applies to the internet penetration rate which is expected to grow to more than 55% in 2018. It is important to review the literature related to social media consumers' behaviour and readiness. First, it is important to explain what the term consumers' social media readiness means. According to Olsen and Andreassen (2014) social media

readiness is defined as "The propensity to embrace and use new social media and related technologies for accomplishing goals in private and professional contexts". Several studies cite the consumer's readiness for social media as a factor that could affect social media adoption and use by SMEs. According to Durkin *et al.* (2013) "Failure to assess the extent to which customers may wish to engage with companies leads to risk to business and relationships for smaller companies many of whom remain largely unaware of both the social media opportunity and threat". There is limited literature concerning how consumers perceive their social media interaction with companies and the nature of this interaction in Saudi Arabia. Most studies focus on social media demographics and users' preferences.

For the current research, it is essential to measure the social media consumers' readiness in Saudi Arabia since it is a factor that could affect the SMEs adoption of social media. Numerous studies exist in the literature related to the users' adoption and use of certain interactive technologies such as social media. One of the studies by Olsen and Andreassen (2014) investigated social media usage and adoption by users. The authors presented findings from a study in which the drivers and constructs of consumers' social media readiness are investigated. They measured four constructs of consumers' readiness which are: Perceived usefulness of social media, perceived ease of use of social media, consumers' attitude towards interaction, and finally trust/privacy of social media.

Another important study is by Dimitrios and Alali (2014) investigated the attitude of the average Saudi towards social media in general and not towards the corporate social media channels. This qualitative study revealed demographics facts related to the use of social media and investigated the attitude of the users towards social networking sites. Similarly, Alrashedi *et al.* (2015) studied the drivers of e-participation in Saudi Arabia; this study provided insights into the intentions of users participating in e-Government activities in Saudi Arabia. A user-centric model of e-participation proposed suggesting that users' e-participation plans are

affected by their attitudes towards e-government, the perceived benefits of e-government, their level of trust of the Government, the extent to which social media is used for e-participation, and social influence and identity.

Another study by the Governance and Innovation Program at the Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government (2014) investigates internet and mobile usage trends in the Arab region. The purpose of the study is to provide updated insights on the usage trends in the Arab World. Another survey by Hoda *et al.* (2014) aims at identifying patterns of internet usage in Saudi Arabia. The study explores the relationship between the internet usage and various demographics, social, economic, and behavioural factors. The results showed that the average daily use of the internet by social media users is significantly correlated to gender, age, marital status, employment and income but no significant relationship is found with the education level of users. Furthermore, it investigated if there is any significant relationship between the average daily use of the internet and online buying behaviour. Table 11 below presents a summary of existing studies in the field of consumers' readiness and use of social media.

| Author   | Region       | Research subject   | Methods |
|--|--------------|--|---------|
| Olsen and Andreassen (2014).                     | Europe       | Social Media Usage and Adoption: Are People Ready?   | Survey  |
| Dimitrios and Alali (2014).                      | Saudi Arabia | Investigating the attitude of the average Saudi towards the Social Media                                   | Survey  |
| Alrashedi <i>et al.</i> (2015).                  | Saudi Arabia | Drivers of e-Participation: Case of Saudi Arabia   | Survey  |
| Hoda et al. (2014).                              | Saudi Arabia | Analysis of Demographic Factors, Internet Usage and Online Shopping for Social Media Users in Saudi Arabia | Survey  |
| Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government (2014). | Middle East  | The Arab World Online 2014: Trends in Internet and Mobile Usage in the Arab Region                         | Survey  |

**Table 11 Summary of existing studies in the field of consumer's readiness for social media**

### 3.4.1.1. Constructs of the consumers' social media readiness framework

Table 12 presents the constructs that will be studied to determine the readiness of Saudi consumers to interacting with companies through corporate social media accounts.

| Factors  |           | Supporting references  |
|--|-----------|--|
| Socio-demographic variables:<br>Age, gender, educational level<br>and monthly income | Age       | Chou <i>et al.</i> (2009). (Alrashedi <i>et al.</i> 2015).   |
|  | Gender    | Chou <i>et al.</i> (2009). Olsen and Andreassen (2014). Alrashedi <i>et al.</i> (2015). Dimitrios and Alali (2014). Hoda <i>et al.</i> (2014). |
|  | Education | Hoda <i>et al.</i> (2014). Alrashedi <i>et al.</i> (2015). Dimitrios and Alali (2014).   |
|  | Income    | Dimitrios and Alali (2014). Hoda <i>et al.</i> (2014). Alrashedi <i>et al.</i> (2015).   |
| Usage information and preferences  |           | The Arab world online (2014).  |
| Type of Interaction on corporate social media channels                               |           | Heinonen (2011). Bernoff & Charlene (2008). Keep Social Honest (2014).   |
| Perceived usefulness of corporate social media channels                              |           | Olsen and Andreassen (2014). Alrashedi <i>et al.</i> (2015). Davis <i>et al.</i> (1989).   |
| Perceived ease of use of social media  |           | Olsen and Andreassen (2014). Davis <i>et al.</i> (1989).   |
| Consumers' attitude towards interaction on corporate social media channels           |           | Olsen and Andreassen (2014). Alrashedi <i>et al.</i> (2015). Dimitrios and Alali (2014). Keep Social Honest (2014).                            |
| Trust/Privacy of social media by consumers   |           | Olsen and Andreassen (2014). Alrashedi <i>et al.</i> (2015). Keep Social Honest (2014). Radcliffe and Lam (2018).                              |

Table 12 Supporting literature for the conceptual framework of the consumers' social media readiness framework

## 2.14. Chapter summary

In this chapter, the literature related to 5 main areas of interest to this study were reviewed. These areas include social media and SMEs definitions, technology adoption theories and existing adoption models, social media benefits to businesses, barriers that prohibit social media success in marketing, social media maturity models and finally consumers' attitude and readiness towards social media corporate accounts. It also discussed the context of social media and SMEs in Saudi Arabia.

The secondary data collection through a literature review is an essential step towards formulating the theoretical framework for each study in this research as it forms the

foundational base that supports the direction of each study. After exploring social media and technology adoption theories and models, 10 social media adoption factors were selected as part of investigating the social media adoption by SMEs in Saudi Arabia. These 10 factors are: Perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, top management commitment, corporate goals, knowledge and skills, resources/budget, infrastructure, sector and competitive pressure.

Through the literature review, seven social media maturity criteria were proposed as part of forming the social media maturity assessment model for this study. These criteria include: Management support, budget, strategy, policy, measurement, measurement tools and process. Similarly, 4 levels of social media progress were proposed for each maturity criteria where each level represents a different stage of maturity in using social media by companies.

The Saudi consumers' readiness for corporate social media accounts will be investigated. This includes studying the usage information and preferences and the type of interaction on corporate social media channels. Whereas the measurement of the consumers' readiness for corporate accounts will be based on 4 variables that were identified from the literature and which include: Perceived usefulness of corporate social media channels, Perceived ease of use of social media, Consumers' attitude towards interaction on corporate social media channels and Trust/Privacy of social media by consumers.

The next chapter will discuss the research methodology in detail, which includes the research methods & process, the theoretical frameworks for three primary studies and the instruments development.

## Chapter 3 – Methodology

### 3. Introduction

This chapter presents details about the research methods and tools that will be used to collect and analyse the research primary data as well as the theoretical frameworks for each study based on the literature review in chapter 2. As discussed in chapter 1, the objective of the current research is to investigate on those aspects that affect the way social media is adopted and used by SMEs, with particular regional emphasis on Saudi Arabia. The current research objectives are:

1. To identify which factors affect the social media adoption by Saudi Arabian SMEs, the value of social media to SMEs and the barriers to success.
2. To develop a social media maturity assessment model by identifying maturity criteria in using social media as well as to propose a formula to calculate the maturity.
3. To assess the consumer social media readiness for corporate social media accounts in Saudi Arabia.
4. To develop an online tool based on the findings of this research which will enable companies to evaluate their use of social media through a social media maturity assessment test and get guidance on how to improve their social media level.

Answering the research questions will help in creating an online tool for social media maturity assessment which will be dedicated and suitable for the SME sector in Saudi Arabia. This chapter will discuss the research matters on design research process, methods, validity and reliability as well as the theoretical frameworks for three studies, the population and sampling and finally the instrument development and pilots.

### 3.1. Research design

It is essential to explain the context of the current research and how it relates to acceptable research methods and approaches. Saunders *et al.* (2007) demonstrated the research design through the concept of a ‘Research Onion’. As presented in figure 2, the Research Onion concept explains the phases that must be tackled when creating a research strategy.

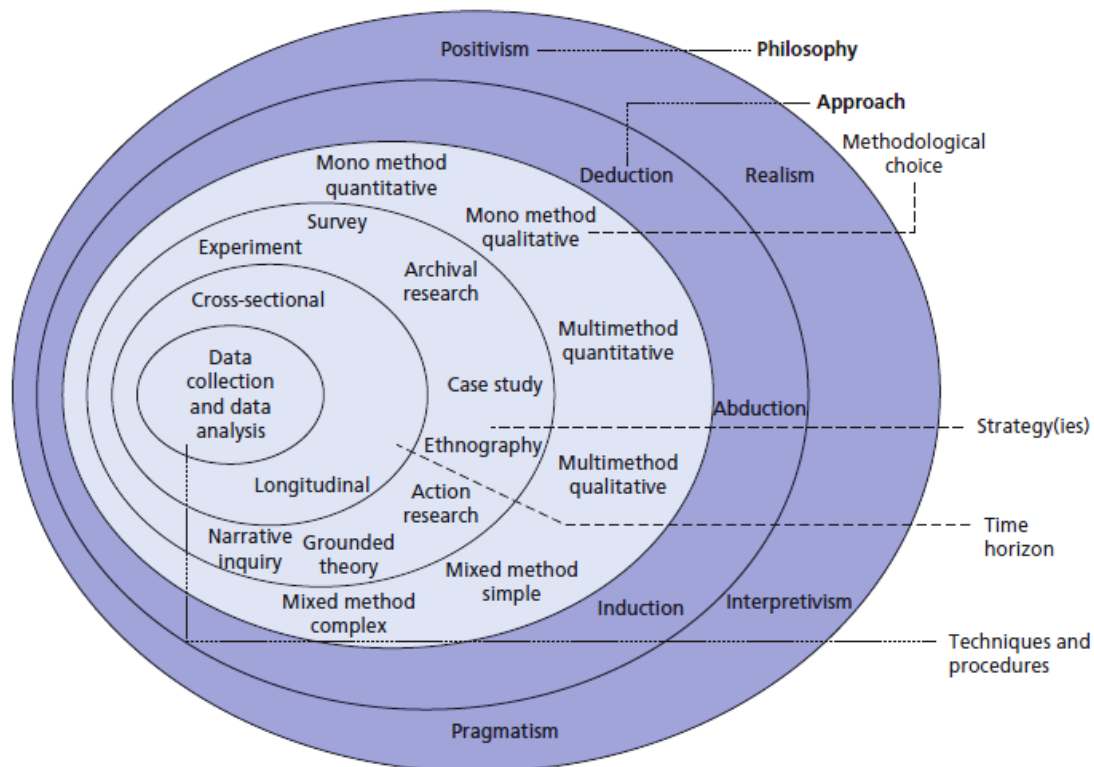


Figure 2 Research Onion diagram by Saunders et al., (2007)

The current research will use the concept of the ‘Research Onion’ by Saunders *et al* in order to explain the research design, starting from the outer layer:

- 1) **Philosophical stances:** Associated with research philosophies. The current research belongs to the Positivism philosophy which involves generating hypotheses and research questions that can be tested. The following research questions were formulated at the beginning of the research process:

**RQ1a:** Which criteria can be used for assessing SMEs’ organisational maturity in using social media in Saudi Arabia?

**RQ1b:** How can the maturity of using social media be calculated based on the criteria identified in this study?

**RQ2a:** Which factors affect SMEs adoption of social media in Saudi Arabia?

**RQ2b:** What are the objectives of using social media by SMEs in Saudi Arabia?

**RQ2c:** What are the benefits Saudi SMEs gained from using SM?

**RQ2d:** What are the obstacles to using SM successfully in Saudi SMEs?

**RQ2e:** What are the barriers to social media adoption in SMEs in Saudi Arabia?

**RQ2f:** How mature are the SMEs in Saudi Arabia and what factors are associated with the maturity?

**RQ3:** How ready are the consumers to use social media corporate accounts in Saudi Arabia?

**2) Approaches:** The current research is considered deductive and involves designing the research approach to testing a hypothesis that was formulated at the beginning of the study according to Silverman, (2013).

**3) Strategies:** The research strategy addresses how the researcher plans to conduct the work using the following eight categories: Experiments testing, surveys, case studies, action research, grounded theory, ethnography, narrative inquiry and archival. A survey is the strategy for the current research. According to Saunders *et al.* (2007) "Survey strategy is usually associated with the deductive approach. It is used to answer who, what, where, how much and how many questions. It is the most common strategy for business and management research and therefore tends to be used for exploratory and descriptive research".

one of the research limitations of the current research was cultural, as there is a level of segregation between men and women in educational institutes and workplace. Therefore, being a female researcher, I would have faced difficulties setting up meetings with male managers or visiting some companies to collect data. Consequently, the survey method was chosen as it is the most suitable method for data collection for the purpose of this study.



- 4) Choices:** The current research follows the mono method choice of research which is based on the use of the quantitative method using surveys.
- 5) Research horizons:** The current research is cross-sectional which means it is a short-term study. While longitudinal is the study that is carried out over a more extended period.
- 6) Techniques and procedures:** This research involve collecting primary data as well as secondary data. The following data analysis techniques are used in the current research via SPSS: Reliability test, descriptive statistics and Chi-square test of association. Table 7 below presents the objectives of using each analysis technique.

| Objectives                               | Data Analysis Techniques |
|--|--------------------------|
| Data Reliability Test                    | Cronbach Alpha           |
| Associations Testing                     | Chi-Square test          |
| Data trend, median, and central tendency | Descriptive Statistics   |

**Table 13 Data analysis techniques used in this research**

### 3.2. Research process

The research process is the roadmap designed to answer the research questions and to ultimately achieve the research objectives. The current research studies different areas related to social media use in Saudi Arabia. More specifically, these areas are:

- 1) Social media maturity in SMEs.
- 2) Social media adoption factors, benefit, and barriers in Saudi Arabian SMEs.
- 3) Saudi consumers' readiness for corporate social media accounts.

These three areas will be studied to answer the research questions and to achieve the research objectives. The research process starts with a literature review analysis that aims at collecting and critically evaluating secondary data related to the three main areas mentioned above in order to form the theoretical framework. This step resulted in the development of the theoretical frameworks for the 3 studies A, B and C which are demonstrated below:

**Research activity A:** This study aims at developing a social media maturity model. It requires collecting primary data using survey questionnaire with social media experts and SMEs in order

to propose a calculation formula that is part of the maturity model and which requires establishing a weight for each maturity criteria.

**Research activity B:** The study intends to collect primary data from SMEs owners and managers in Saudi Arabia related to the following 3 aspects:

- Investigating social media adoption factors, benefits and obstacles.
- Collecting data from SMEs owners and managers as part of establishing weight of the maturity criteria.
- Measuring social media maturity of these companies based on the proposed maturity model in this study. This will help in getting results about the overall maturity of Saudi SMEs (which is one of the research questions) and will assist in identifying associations between the social media maturity of companies and other variables which might result in discovering new maturity criteria.

**Research activity C:** This study's objective is to collect primary data using survey from social media users in Saudi Arabia and aims at assessing their readiness for corporate social media accounts.

The above research activities will be discussed in more detail in the next sections. The theoretical framework of each research activity will be explained followed by the design of the study that includes the instrument development, population and sample size. Figure 3 demonstrates three research studies, stages and processes that were followed to answer the research questions.

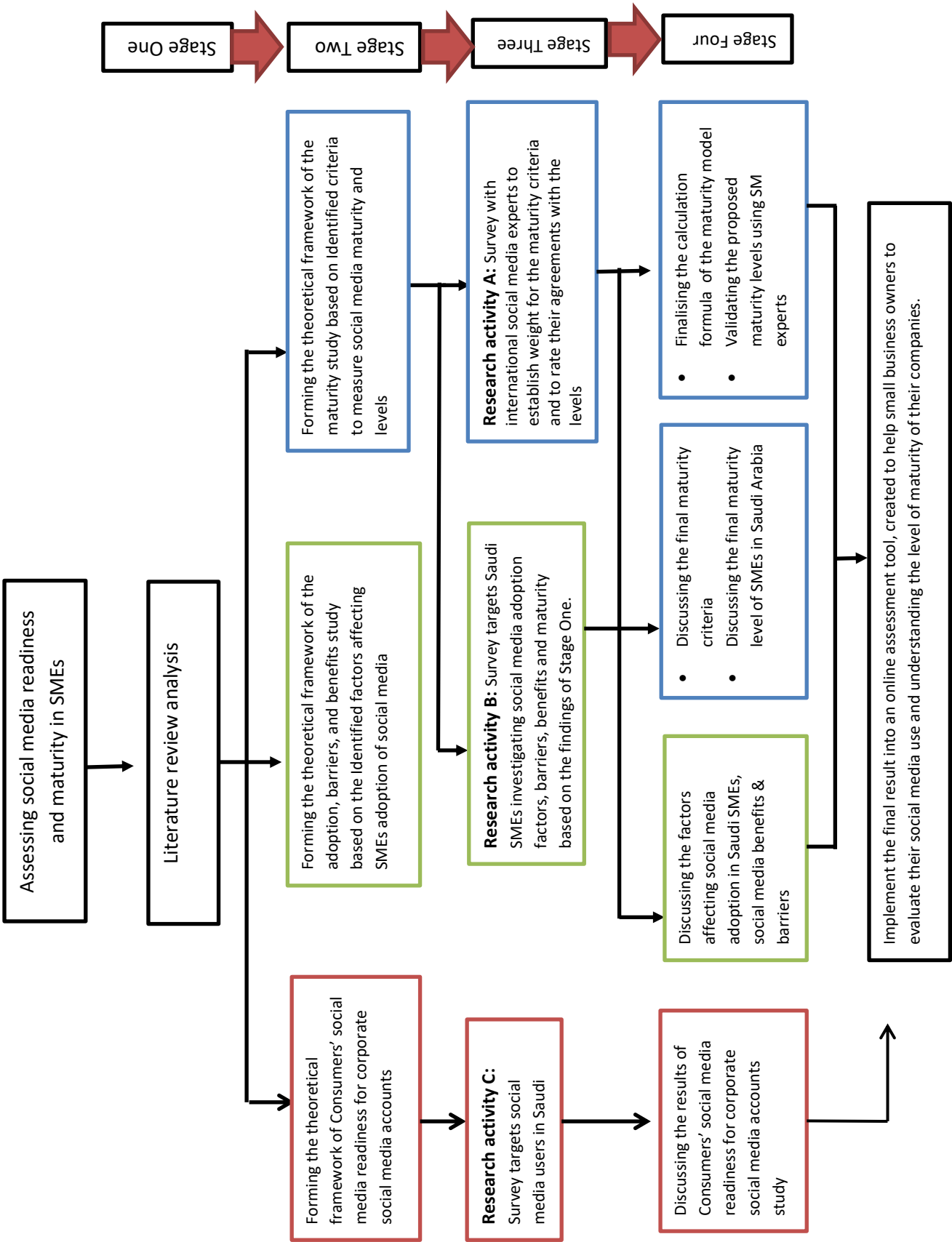


Figure 3 Research Process

### 3.3. Overview of the research methods used in the current research

According to Rajasekar *et al.* (2013) "Research methods are the various procedures, schemes, and algorithms used in research. All the methods used by a researcher during a research study are termed as research methods. They are essentially planned, scientific and value-neutral. They include theoretical procedures, experimental studies, numerical schemes, statistical approaches etc. Research methods help us collect samples, data and find a solution to a problem". Table 8 below presents the research stages and methods of the current research.

| Research objectives  | Research questions   | Process and methods   | Research design type                       |                     |
|--|--|---|--|---------------------|
| <b>1- To develop a model that assesses social media maturity of SMEs</b> | <b>RQ1a:</b> Which criteria can be used for assessing SMEs' maturity in using social media in Saudi Arabia?            | <p><b>Step 1:</b> Secondary data collection through literature review to identify social media maturity criteria and levels of progress.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Forming the social media maturity model which contains maturity criteria and levels based on the literature review in Step 1.</p>  | Quantitative using cross-sectional surveys | Research activity A |
|  | <b>RQ1b:</b> How the maturity of using social media based on the criteria identified in this study will be calculated? | <p><b>Step 3:</b> Proposing a formula for calculating the social media maturity of SMEs based on the maturity model developed in Step 2.</p> <p><b>Step 4:</b> Conducting primary data collection using surveys to establish the weight of the maturity criteria which will be part of the maturity calculation in the proposed maturity model. The survey targets 2 populations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey with SMEs owners &amp; managers in Saudi Arabia to rate the criteria based on their importance to a successful social media use.</li> <li>• Survey with social media experts to rate the</li> </ul> |  |                     |

|   |  |  |   |                            |
|---|--|--|---|----------------------------|
|   |  | <p>criteria based on their importance to a successful use of social media (for criteria weight). Experts will also rate their agreement with the maturity levels (for validation).</p> <p><b>Step 5:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analysing the data using SPSS to obtain the average (median) of the rated criteria. The final average will be the weight of the criteria.</li> <li>Measuring the agreement of the experts with the maturity levels.</li> </ul> <p><b>Step 6:</b> Proposing the final social media maturity calculation formula.</p>  |   |                            |
| <p><b>2- To investigate the adoption and use of social media among SMEs in Saudi Arabia and to explore the relationships between demographics, adoption factors, barriers and maturity criteria in Saudi SMEs</b></p> | <p><b>RQ2a:</b> Which are the factors that affect SMEs adoption of social media in Saudi Arabia?</p> | <p><b>Step 1:</b> Conducting a secondary data collection through literature review to identify adoption factors, barriers, benefits gained by using social media.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Forming the theoretical framework which includes the constructs to be investigated and which are related to each research question.</p> <p><b>Step 3:</b> Creating survey using the theoretical framework created in Step 2 and start the data collection with 71 Saudi SMEs.</p> <p><b>Step 4:</b> analysing the data collected using SPSS &amp; Nvivo:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To answer the research questions.</li> </ul> | <p>Qualitative/<br/>quantitative</p> <p>Cross-sectional surveys</p> | <p>Research activity B</p> |
|   | <p><b>RQ2b:</b> What are the objectives of using social media by SMEs in Saudi Arabia?</p>           |  |   |                            |
|   | <p><b>RQ2c:</b> What are the benefits Saudi SMEs gained from using SM?</p>                           |  |   |                            |
|   | <p><b>RQ2d:</b> What are the obstacles to using SM successfully in Saudi SMEs?</p>                   |  |   |                            |
|   | <p><b>RQ2e:</b> What are the barriers to social media adoption in SMEs in Saudi Arabia?</p>          |  |   |                            |

|   |   |  |  |                     |
|---|---|--|--|---------------------|
|   | <b>RQ2f:</b> How mature are the SMEs in Saudi Arabia and what factors are associated with the maturity? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To identify associations between the main variables in this study.</li> </ul>   |  |                     |
| <b>3- To measure the readiness of social media users in Saudi Arabia for social media corporate accounts.</b> | <b>RQ3:</b> How ready are the consumers to use social media corporate accounts in Saudi Arabia?         | <p><b>Step 1:</b> Conducting secondary data collection through literature review to create the theoretical framework of this study.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Creating survey with 363 social media users in Saudi Arabia based on the theoretical framework in Step 1.</p> <p><b>Step 3:</b> Analysing the data using SPSS and answering the RQ3.</p> | Quantitative<br>Cross-sectional survey | Research Activity C |
| <b>4- To develop an online maturity assessment tool based on the findings of studies A, B and C</b>           |   |  |  |                     |

Table 14 Research stages

### 3.4. Research validity

Research validity is defined by Heale and Twycross (2015) as “the extent to which a concept is accurately measured in a quantitative study”. Since the instrument used for collecting primary data in the current research is survey, there are four types of validity related to surveys: Content, face, criterion and construct (Fink, 2016).

For the current research, face and content validity were the types used to ensure the validity of each instrument. The first step towards validating this research started with a content validity which is defined by Litwin (1995) as "A subjective measure of how appropriate the items seem to a set of reviewers who have some knowledge of the subject." Typically, content validity involves checking the literature for models and conceptual frameworks from which we could develop appropriate definitions (Fink, 2016). This research involved content validity regarding how each study design relied on a theoretical framework which was created after reviewing the relevant literature. Each theoretical framework was constructed based on existing theories and

models, and the constructs of our three studies are derived from these existing models. This is the first step towards ensuring the validity of the study. After creating the surveys, face validity was applied which is defined by Fink (2016) as "How a measure appears on the surface: Does it seem to ask all needed questions? Does it use the appropriate language and language levels to do so?" For this purpose, Pilot studies were conducted with reviewers related to each topic. Those reviewers were asked to fill in the surveys and then to answer the following questions at the end:

- Can you identify any question that was not clear or understood in the survey?
- Can you identify any ambiguities or difficult questions in the survey?
- Are there important questions which have not been included in the questionnaire?
- Did each question offer an adequate range of responses? If not, please specify.
- Can you provide suggestions for editing, adding or removing questions or response options?
- How long did it take you to complete the questionnaire?
- Where there any ethical issues related to the content and the language of the topics involved?

The surveys were then modified according to the feedback of the reviewers. A pilot study was conducted prior to launching each survey which helped shape the surveys and validate it before the actual data collection.

### 3.5. Survey reliability

Trochim, (2006) states that "Reliability has to do with the quality of measurement; it is the *consistency or repeatability* of your measures".

According to Fink (2016) "A reliable survey instrument is one that is relatively free of measurement errors". Since the data collection instrument for the current study is a survey, internal consistency reliability is "commonly used type of reliability for surveys instruments

and scales" Litwin (1995). It is applied to a group of items that are intended to measure different aspects of the same concept. It is a sign of how well various items measure the same issue. According to Fink (2016) internal consistency is measured statistically using Cronbach Alpha. In this research, Cronbach Alpha was calculated for all items measured and the findings will be displayed in the result chapter for each research activity.

### 3.6. Research methodology:

Rajasekar *et al.* (2013) describe research methodology as "A systematic way to solve a problem. It is a science of studying how research is to be carried out. Essentially, the procedures by which researchers go about their work of describing, explaining and predicting phenomena are called research methodology. It is also defined as the study of methods by which knowledge is gained. It aims to give the work plan of research". According to Saunders *et al.* (2007) "Research methodology involves the theoretical frameworks and learning of the various techniques that can be used in the conduct of research and the conduct of tests, experiments, surveys and critical studies".

For this research, the methodology of the three studies, research activities A, B and C will be discussed in more detail in the next sections along with their theoretical frameworks, population and sampling as well as the instrument development.

The next sections will present the theoretical framework for research activities A, B and C.

#### 3.6.1. Theoretical framework of research activity A study:

The first study in this research aims to develop a social media maturity model and a calculation formula by answering the following question:

- **RQ1a:** Which criteria can be used for assessing SMEs' maturity in using social media in Saudi Arabia?
- **RQ1b:** How will the maturity of using social media be calculated based on the criteria identified in this study?



### 3.6.1.1. The proposed social media maturity model (model development)

There are 3 components in the development of the social media maturity assessment model. These components are 1) Maturity criteria 2) Maturity levels 3) Maturity calculation formula. The maturity criteria were identified and discussed in chapter 2 and they include: Management support, budget, strategy, policy, measurement, measurement tools and process. The maturity levels were also identified in chapter 2; they consist of 4 maturity progress levels.

#### i. Social media maturity criteria

We created a model based on the literature analysis in chapter 2 that covers seven maturity criteria which will be adopted to measure the maturity (success) of using social media in SMEs. These criteria are:

#### ii. Social media maturity levels

Through the literature review in chapter 2, four stages of organisational maturity in social media were identified. These stages are based on the seven maturity criteria discussed in the previous section. These stages of social media maturity are essential in measuring the overall organisational maturity in using social media. Each stage will be assigned a score, for example level one of any criteria will be given score 1, level 2 will be given score 2 etc.

Table 9 presents the specifications of the four levels of maturity based on the seven criteria identified earlier in this research.

#### iii. Proposed social media maturity assessment calculation formula

After identifying the maturity criteria and the specifications of each maturity level in the previous section, it is time to propose a calculation method to measure the overall organisational social media maturity. In order to calculate the final score of maturity, seven questions were formed based on the maturity stages in the previous sections. Each question is related to one of the maturity criteria. Each question will have four multiple answers related to

4 maturity levels as presented in Table 9. Each answer will be given a score from 1 to 4 based on the maturity levels it reflects.

Below is an example of one question in the maturity test:

Q1: When it comes to the top management support in your company, which of the following answers reflects the actual situation in your company?

- Social media marketing in my company has no support from top management/owner, it has only the individual support of the employee who works on it
- Social media marketing in my company has the support of mid management only (example: the marketing manager).
- Social media marketing in my company has the support of top management (the director/owner)
- My company is social media oriented. Social media is an essential part of the company's identity

The calculation formula proposed for this study is as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Sum of: (score achieved for each criterion} \times \text{each criteria weight)}}{\text{Total sum of all criteria weight}} = \text{The final maturity level (1/2/3/4)}$$

*Total sum of all criteria weight*

Based on this calculation formula, the maturity of a company in social media will be calculated based on seven questions related to the seven maturity criteria, for example:

Q1: When it comes to the top management support in your company, which of the following answers reflects the actual situation in your company?

| Response options  | score | weight              |
|---|-------|---------------------|
| ○ Social media marketing in my company has no support from top management/owner, it has only the individual support of the employee who works on it | 1     | × (criteria weight) |
| ○ Social media marketing in my company has the support of mid management only (example: the marketing manager).                                     | 2     |                     |
| ○ Social media marketing in my company has the support of top management (the director/owner)   | 3     |                     |
| ○ My company is social media oriented. Social media is an essential part of the company's identity  | 4     |                     |

The full developed maturity test is presented in Appendix 1.

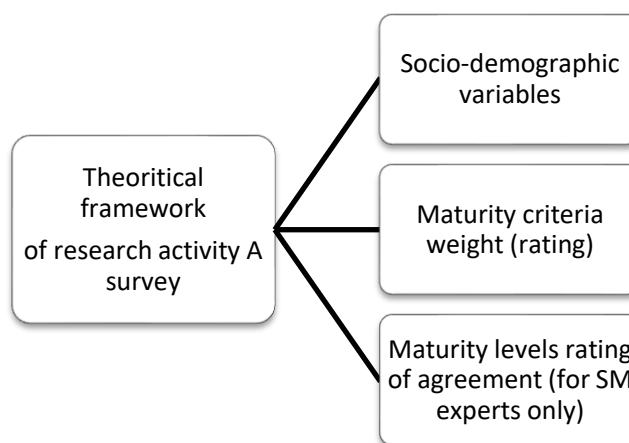
#### iv. Social media maturity criteria weight

After developing the maturity assessment model based on criteria and maturity levels, a calculation formula was developed to measure the final overall level of maturity for a company. However, an essential aspect of the maturity calculation proposed for this study is not addressed in the literature. The gap is related to the criteria weight, as most of the existing maturity models do not provide a calculation for maturity and do not propose weight for these criteria. Consequently, there is a gap in the literature related to this area. To address the gap, a study was developed with the aim of establishing a weight for each maturity criterion based on the importance of each criterion to a successful use of social media in marketing within an organisation. This will be the subject of research activity A survey.

#### 3.6.1.2. Research methods - research activity A: Maturity model development

As this is a quantitative study, a primary data collection was conducted using cross-sectional survey as the research instrument and aims at:

- Proposing weights for the seven maturity criteria and finalising the calculation formula.
- Validating the proposed 4 maturity levels by measuring the extent of the agreement of social media experts with the proposed social media progress levels. Figure 4 summarises the theoretical framework of research activity (A) survey.



**Figure 4**  
Theoretical  
framework  
of research  
activity A

### 3.6.1.3. Population and sampling – Research activity A

The survey targets two populations, 1) Social media experts who work in the field of social media internationally, and 2) Owners or managers in SMEs that use social media in Saudi Arabia.

The rationale behind collecting data from those two populations is that SMEs are the primary context of this study and their experiences and practices in using social media are significant to this study. Whereas experts have the knowledge, experience, and the know-how in social media marketing which may not necessarily be related only to SMEs context but still needed for this study. Collecting data from those two populations also serves as a triangulation method where the results of both data can be compared by checking their similarities and differences. Data from both populations combined will give a better insight and results for this study.

A systematic random sample of social media experts was collected via LinkedIn where social media professionals and academics were invited to participate in this study. Whereas a systematic random sample of Saudi Arabian SMEs was drawn from a directory website (<http://www.findsaudi.com>) that provides lists of companies located only in Saudi Arabia along with their contact details and locations. The sample of SMEs was also gathered via Google maps searches where a list of businesses located in different cities in Saudi Arabia was gathered and invited to participate in this study.

### 3.6.1.4. Instrument development – Research activity A survey

Two online surveys were developed using Google forms. The online method proved to be easier and more convenient to fill in as the respondents could fill it in at their convenience. Next, 15 experts and 5 SMEs participated in a pilot study as part of validating the survey by ensuring that the questions are precise and understood. The participants were asked to fill in the survey and provide feedback about it by answering the seven questions related to the clarity

and relevance of the survey which were presented in the research validity section. The survey has the following sections:

- Three demographic questions including current working title, years of experience in social media and city.
- Question about rating 7 criteria of social media maturity on a 10-points Likert type scale based on their importance to the successful use of social media in marketing.

Example of question:

*On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 being not at all important and 10 being extremely important, rate the following social media factors according to how important each one of them is to a mature & successful use of social media. Answer based on your experience and knowledge.*

- |   |
|---|
| 1. Top management support: to the social media use in the company         |
| 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  |
| 2. Budget dedicated for social media campaigns & advertising and training |
| 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  |

- The experts were also asked in the survey to rate from 0 to 10 the extent of their agreement with each maturity level in terms of its accuracy in reflecting the proposed level.

Example of question:

*In the context of small & medium companies, the following statements reflect 4 levels of social media progress related to the factor “TOP MANAGEMENT SUPPORT TO SOCIAL MEDIA”.*

*On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 being I strongly disagree with the level that the statement reflects and 10 being I strongly agree with the level the statement reflects, rate these statements according to the extent to which you agree with the level they reflect. Level 1 = not advanced, level 4 the most advanced.*

|  |
|--|
| Level 1: When using social media in the company has no support from top management, it has only the individual support of the employee who works on it |
|--|

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

1. Level 2: When using social media in the company has the support of mid management only (example: the marketing manager)

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

The full version of the research activity A survey is presented in appendix 2.

#### 3.6.1.5. Pilot study – Research activity A

According to Milianny (2013) a pilot study is an important method that allows a researcher to test the suitability of the instruments used for the process of data collection. The author states that the researcher must pilot the questions with respondents who belong to the same population of the main study. After creating the survey, a pilot study was conducted by distributing an online version of the survey to 15 social media experts from different countries and 5 SMEs located in Saudi Arabia through email and LinkedIn invitations. The participants were asked to fill in the survey and to answer the seven questions mentioned in the validity section in this chapter. The survey then was updated according to the feedback from the pilot study before starting the data collection process from December 2016 to April 2017.

#### 3.6.2. Theoretical framework for research activity B

The second study in the current research is designed to answer the following 6 research questions:

**RQ2a:** Which factors affect SMEs adoption of social media in Saudi Arabia?

**RQ2b:** What are the objectives of using social media by SMEs in Saudi Arabia?

**RQ2c:** What are the benefits Saudi SMEs gained from using SM?

**RQ2d:** What are the obstacles to using SM successfully in Saudi SMEs?

**RQ2e:** What are the barriers to social media adoption in SMEs in Saudi Arabia?

**RQ2f:** How mature are the SMEs in Saudi Arabia and what factors are associated with the maturity?

The theoretical framework for this study is presented in figure 5. This study aims at collecting primary data from Saudi SMEs in relation to 6 different aspects related to their social media use. These areas are: Social media adoption factors, barriers to social media adoption, the benefits SMEs gain from social media, the obstacles towards using social media successfully by SMEs and finally how mature are these companies in their use of social media based on the maturity model developed in research activity A. The first step towards answering these research questions was to create the theoretical base for this study by identifying factors that affect the adoption of social media, the benefit of using social media and the obstacles from the literature which have been already discussed in the literature review chapter in this thesis. After creating the theoretical framework of the study which defines what is to be investigated, the variables and constructs for each part of the study will be discussed in the next sections.

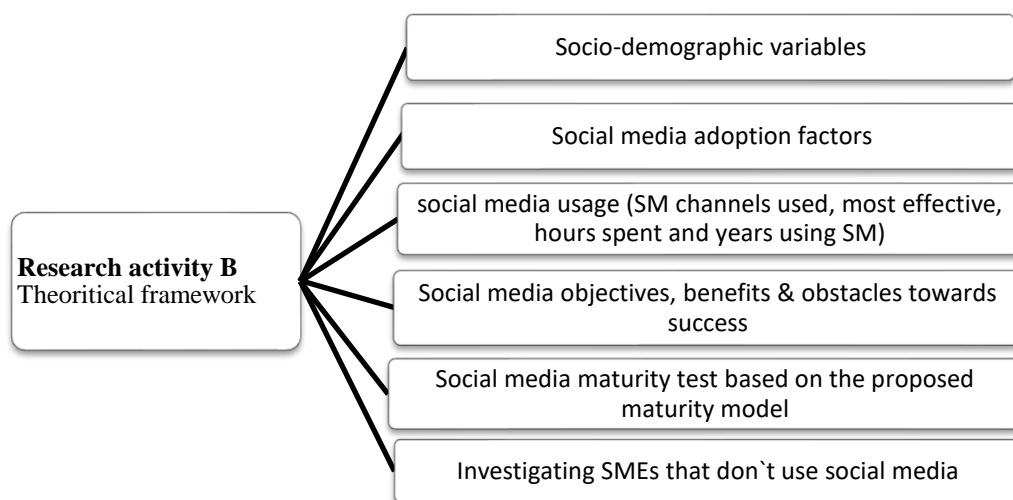


Figure 5 Theoretical framework of research activity B

- [Social media adoption factors](#)

As discussed in chapter 2 of this thesis, many studies focused on the adoption of different web technologies by companies. However, there are limited studies that focused on Saudi SMEs and their adoption of social media or the obstacles they face to use them. This study addresses this gap by focusing on Saudi companies. The identified adoption factors belong to 3 dimensions as presented in table (15).

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Organisational Dimension | Perceived usefulness of social media, perceived ease of use, top management commitment, corporate goals, Knowledge/skills & training, resources & budget. |
| Technological dimension  | The availability of infrastructure.   |
| Environmental dimension  | Sector, external competitive pressure and consumers' readiness.   |

Table 15 Adoption factors

- Social media objectives of companies

In chapter 2 of this thesis, the objectives of using social media were identified. Table 16 presents the social media objectives that companies mentioned in previous studies and which will be used in the survey.

| Social media objectives                     |
|---|
| To create exposure to the company's website |
| To engage with consumers                    |
| To generate leads                           |
| To create brand awareness                   |
| To facilitate support of customers          |
| To reach target consumers                   |

Table 16 Summary of social media objectives in research activity B

- Benefits of using social media to businesses

Table 17 presents the benefits that companies gained through using social media in previous studies and which will be used in the survey with Saudi SMEs.

| Benefits   |
|--|
| Increased exposure to the company                |
| Reduced marketing expenses                       |
| Generated leads                                  |
| Improved sales                                   |
| Increased traffic to the main website            |
| Increased number of loyal customers              |
| Helped growing business partnerships             |
| Provided the company with marketplace insights   |
| Improved the company's ranking on search engines |

Table 17 Summary of social media benefits used in research activity B



- Obstacles to success in using social media

Table 18 shows the obstacles that companies face when working on social media from previous studies which were identified in chapter 2 of this thesis and will be part of the survey with Saudi SMEs.

| Obstacles   |
|---|
| Lack of time  |
| No technological infrastructure that supports social media in the company |
| Lack of skills and knowledge in using social media                        |
| No dedicated team to work on social media                                 |
| Saudi consumers are not ready   |
| Lack of resources / budget to spend on social media activities            |
| Lack of management support  |
| Social media is not useful for my business                                |
| No external competition   |
| No clear strategy to follow   |
| No measurement to the social media activities and efforts                 |

Table 18 Obstacles to success in using social media

### 3.6.2.1. Population and sampling – Research activity B

The survey targets owners and managers of small and medium companies located in Saudi Arabia, whither they are users of social media in their business or non-users. This is the same sample of SMEs which was identified in research activity A. The rationale behind targeting this segment is because this study focuses only on SMEs located in Saudi Arabia. Companies are affected by culture, economy, religion and geographical location that they operate in (Marjanova and Stojanovski, 2012) which means that social media adoption factors in companies for example in the UK, might be different than the adoption factors of companies in Riyadh or Dubai. And since this study's primary focus is to investigate the SMEs in Saudi Arabia, the targeted population will be small and medium companies in Saudi Arabia. The SMEs were selected based on the SMEs definition in Saudi Arabia which defines micro-small businesses as the ones with 1 to 5 employees; a small company is 6 to 49 employees whereas a

medium business is the one with 50 to 249 employees (Ministry of Commerce and Investment, 2016).

A systematic random sample of 400 companies was drawn from a list of Saudi Arabian companies' directory website ([www.findsaudi.com](http://www.findsaudi.com)) which lists Saudi businesses location and contact information. Also, Google map searches were used to find companies located in different cities in Saudi Arabia. Next, the companies were contacted via email where they were provided with details about the study and a link to the online survey.

#### 3.6.2.2. Instrument development – Research activity B survey

Cross-sectional survey was used as the instrument for the data collection in this study. A survey was developed in the Arabic language online using Google forms. The online method proved to be easier and more convenient to fill in as the respondents can fill it in at their convenience. The survey has the following sections:

- Ten demographic questions. (City, position, gender, age, degree, number of employees, commercial activity, year established, do they have a website, do they use social media).
- If they use social media: (why they adopted it (Open-ended question), how many years they used it, how many hours they dedicate for social media per week, which social media channels they use, which social media channel is the most useful for their business).
- Social media adoption factors using 5 points Likert scale type comprising 21 statements related to each social media adoption factor presented in table 15.
- Seven multiple responses questions for social media maturity related to 7 maturity criteria.
- Three multiple response questions about the objectives of using social media presented in table 16, social media benefits gained presented in table 17 and the obstacles they face to use social media successfully shown in table 18.
- Four questions for companies that don't use social media (1 open-ended question about why they don't use social media, 1 multi-response question about what are the reasons for not

using them, 1 multi-response question about if they plan to use social media in the future, and 1 open-ended question about why they plan to use social media.

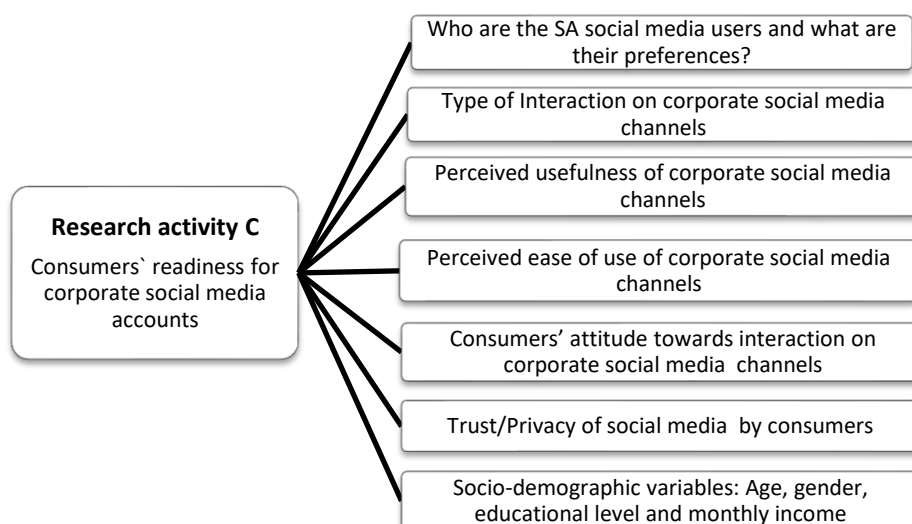
The full survey of research activity B is presented in appendix 3 in English and appendix 4 in Arabic.

### 3.6.2.3. Pilot study – Research activity B

As part of validating the survey before launching it and to test the consistency of the survey that will be used for the primary data collection, a pilot study with 5 SMEs located in Saudi Arabia was conducted after creating the survey. The companies were contacted using email invitations. The participants were asked to fill in the survey and to answer the seven questions presented in the validity section in this chapter. Minor changes were made to the survey according to the feedback from the pilot study before starting the data collection process from December 2016 to April 2017.

### 3.6.3. Theoretical framework of research activity C

This study investigates the consumer social media readiness for corporate social media accounts in Saudi Arabia. The proposed theoretical framework for this study is based on the literature review analysis in chapter 2. The theoretical framework of the current study presents seven components to be studied in order to understand more about the readiness of Saudi



**Figure 6 Theoretical framework of research activity C**

consumers for corporate social media accounts. These areas are related to who are the Saudi Arabian social media users and what their preferences are, the type of interaction on corporate social media accounts, perceived usefulness of corporate social media channels, perceived ease of use of social media, consumers' attitude towards interaction on corporate social media channels, trust/privacy of social media by consumers as well as the socio-demographic variables: Age, gender, educational level and income. Figure 6 demonstrates the components that will be studied as part of assessing the consumers' readiness for corporate social media accounts.

#### 3.6.3.1. Constructs of the consumers' social media readiness framework

Table 19 presents the constructs that will be studied to determine the readiness of Saudi consumers to interacting with companies through corporate social media accounts. These constructs will be the base of research activity C survey.

| Factors  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Socio-demographic variables:<br>Age, gender, educational level<br>and monthly income | Age       |
|  | Gender    |
|  | Education |
|  | Income    |
| Usage information and preferences  |           |
| Type of Interaction on corporate social media channels                               |           |
| Perceived usefulness of corporate social media channels                              |           |
| Perceived ease of use of social media  |           |
| Consumers' attitude towards interaction on corporate social media channels           |           |
| Trust/Privacy of social media by consumers   |           |

Table 19 Supporting literature for the conceptual framework of the consumers' social media readiness framework

#### 3.6.3.2. Population and sampling – Research activity C survey

The nature of the current research is quantitative. Sukamolson (2005) defines quantitative research as "Social research that employs empirical methods and empirical statements. An empirical statement is defined as a descriptive statement about what "is" the case in the "real world" rather than what "ought" to be the case. Typically, empirical statements are expressed in numerical terms". The best data collection instrument for this study is a survey questionnaire.

According to Bartlett *et al.* (2011) "Sample size is one of the four inter-related features of a study design that can influence the detection of significant differences, relationships or interactions".

The targeted population for the current study is the social media users in Saudi Arabia, which has an estimated population of 32.45 million as of 2017. To calculate the required sample size needed, with 5% margin of error and 95% confidence level and 50% response distribution, the minimum recommended sample size is 384 respondents. A systematic random sample of 400 social media users located in Saudi Arabia only was drawn from a contact list, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook and WhatsApp.

#### 3.6.3.3. Instrument development – Research activity C survey

A survey questionnaire was created in 2 versions, Arabic and English, using Google forms which is an electronic method for surveys. The survey was first designed using the English language and then was translated by the researcher. The translation was then reviewed and approved by a professional translator. We found that the electronic survey method is convenient for this study which focuses on social media users in Saudi Arabia and therefore they are more likely to be reached online. Also, the electronic method is suitable in terms of giving the respondents the freedom to fill in the survey at their convenience which could result in a higher response rate than paper surveys.

Based on the theoretical framework for the current study presented in table 13, the survey questionnaire has the following section:

- Demographical variables (Gender, age, education, income, and city)
- Which are the most used social media networks in Saudi Arabia?
- What is the frequency of accessing the social media accounts?
- Which device is used by most Saudis to connect to social media?
- Which social media network is their preferred channel to communicate with companies?

- 18 statements about the types of interaction done by Saudi consumers on corporate social media accounts. (Type of interaction)
- 5 points Likert scale type for 7 statements about perceived usefulness of social media as a useful tool to communicate with companies. (Perceived usefulness)
- 5 points Likert scale type for four statements related to perceived ease of use of social media by Saudi consumers to communicate with companies. (Perceived ease of use)
- 5 points Likert scale type for three statements about the attitude of Saudi consumers towards communicating with companies (Attitude)
- 5 points Likert scale type for eight statements to measure the Saudis' trust & privacy of social media channels. (Trust).

The full survey of research activity c is presented in appendix 5 in English and appendix 6 in Arabic.

#### 3.6.3.4. Pilot study – Research activity C

To ensure the validity and the suitability of the survey, a pilot study was conducted after creating the survey with 25 social media users who live in Saudi Arabia through email invitations. The survey was updated according to the feedback from the pilot study, and finally, it was translated into Arabic. The two versions of the survey Arabic and English were launched, and the data collection started on 22 June 2016.

#### 3.7. Ethical considerations

The research design was approved by the Computing Research Ethics Committee at Middlesex University in July 2016. There were no ethical issues related to the study design and it was considered low risk as it does not ask for the identity of the respondents or the businesses. A detailed information sheet explaining the study and presenting the researcher was included with each online survey. A consent form was obtained prior to the participation of the respondents. The participants were given the possibility to ask the researcher questions about the study and

the survey. They were also informed that their participation is voluntary and that they are free to withdraw at any time without giving reasons. Also, they were assured that the confidentiality of their data will be upheld through the removal of any personal identifiers if there are any.

Since the surveys were electronic, an online consent form was presented to the participants after displaying the information sheet and before presenting the survey. The participants were notified to read the consent form before proceeding to the survey and were alerted that by clicking (OK) they consent to participate in the study. The consent and ethical approval forms are included in the Appendices.

### 3.8. Chapter summary

This chapter discussed the research methods and processes related to the following three different studies:

**Research activity A** intends to answer the following research questions:

- **RQ1a:** Which criteria can be used for assessing SMEs' organisational maturity in using social media in Saudi Arabia?
- **RQ1b:** How will the maturity of using social media be calculated based on the criteria identified in this study?

In research activity A, a social media maturity model was proposed, it requires collecting primary data using a survey with international social media experts and Saudi Arabian SMEs owners/ managers in order to propose weight that will be used in the maturity calculation formula. The calculation formula requires establishing weights for the seven maturity criteria which were proposed in the maturity model.

**Research activity B** intends to answer the following research questions:

- **RQ2a:** Which factors affect SMEs adoption of social media in Saudi Arabia?
- **RQ2b:** What are the objectives of using social media by SMEs in Saudi Arabia?
- **RQ2c:** What are the benefits Saudi SMEs gained from using SM?
- **RQ2d:** What are the obstacles to using SM successfully in Saudi SMEs?

- **RQ2e:** What are the barriers to social media adoption in SMEs in Saudi Arabia?
- **RQ2f:** How mature are the SMEs in Saudi Arabia and what factors are associated with the maturity?

Research activity B requires collecting primary data from a sample of SMEs in Saudi Arabia related to social media adoption factors, the objectives for using social media, the benefits gained from social media, the obstacles they face to succeed in social media and finally the level of maturity of these companies based on the proposed maturity model in research activity A. It also intends to examine the associations between the level of maturity and other variables within the company. Surveys will be used as the instrument for the data collection.

**Research activity C** intends to answer the following research question:

- **RQ3:** How ready are the consumers to use social media corporate accounts in Saudi Arabia?

Research activity C requires collecting primary data from social media users in Saudi Arabia regarding their perceived usefulness and ease of use of social media, the attitude, trust and privacy concerns towards social media as well as the type of actions they perform on corporate social media accounts using surveys.

This chapter presented the theoretical framework for each study and discussed the research methods used as well as the population and sample size and finally the instrument design and the pilot studies.

The next chapter will present the data collection process and the data analysis and findings of research activity A.



## Chapter 4 - Research Activity A - Data collection, analysis & results

### 4. Introduction

This chapter discusses the data collection process, the data analysis and research findings for the first study (**research activity A**) and aims at establishing a weight for the social media maturity criteria which were identified from the literature. Creating weight for the maturity criteria is part of the maturity calculation formula which was proposed in chapter 3. As discussed in the research methods, a survey questionnaire was developed to collect data from social media experts and business owners and managers by asking them to rate from 0 to 10 the seven maturity criteria based on their importance for a successful social media use. The ratings were then analysed, and the average of each criterion rating will be used as a weight in the maturity calculation formula. The result of research activity A will answer the following research question: **RQ1b:** How the maturity of using social media based on the criteria identified in this study will be calculated?

This chapter starts by discussing the data collection process of research activity A and then it presents the data analysis and findings of the survey.

#### 4.1. Data collection

The data was gathered using an electronic survey (Google forms) managed between winter 2016 to spring 2017. The process was carried out in two steps. The first step, a systematic random sample of 400 companies was drawn from a list of Saudi Arabian companies' directory website ([www.findsaudi.com](http://www.findsaudi.com)) which lists Saudi businesses location and contact information.

Also, Google map search was used to find companies located in different cities in Saudi Arabia.

A company's name and email address were identified. Contact email addresses usually belong to the owner of the company or someone in the top management. Also, a sample of 300 social media experts contact details were identified using LinkedIn; those social media experts are professionals who work in the field of social media such as managers, executives and academics from different companies and universities around the world.

In the second step, an initial e-mailing that explained the aim of the study and a request to participate with a link to the survey was sent to both lists of experts and SMEs. A total of 47 responses from experts and 55 responses from companies were received. That makes a total of 102 responses combined from both samples with a response rate of 15.69%.

## 4.2. Data analysis and findings

A total of 102 responses were received. 55 of the answers came from Saudi Arabian SMEs whereas 47 responses came from social media experts living in different countries. Both sets of data will be analysed separately to compare the results, then the two sets of rating data will be combined to get the final average weight for each maturity criteria.

The reliability of both surveys (experts and SMEs) will be analysed and discussed before presenting the data analysis of the average rating score for the maturity criteria.

### 4.2.1. Reliability test for the expert survey/ criteria rating

As discussed in the methodology chapter, the reliability test will be performed on each set of data that will be analysed since there are different studies in this research which aim at measuring different subjects. A reliability analysis was conducted on the social media criteria ratings of the expert survey comprising seven items using SPSS. In table 20 Cronbach's alpha result showed the questionnaire to reach high reliability,  $\alpha = 0.94$ . All items seemed to be worthy of retention, resulting in a decrease in the alpha if deleted.

**Case Processing Summary (expert)**

|       |                       | N  | %     |
|-------|-----------------------|----|-------|
| Cases | Valid                 | 47 | 100.0 |
|       | Excluded <sup>a</sup> | 0  | .0    |
|       | Total                 | 47 | 100.0 |

**Reliability Statistics (expert)**

| Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
|------------------|--|------------|
| .945             | .945   | 7          |

**Item-Total Statistics (Expert survey)**

|               | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Squared Multiple Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|---------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Support-X     | 42.5106                    | 208.081                        | .650                             | .526                         | .949                             |
| Budget-X      | 43.2340                    | 190.835                        | .790                             | .672                         | .938                             |
| Strategy-X    | 42.7660                    | 179.661                        | .865                             | .759                         | .932                             |
| PolicyX       | 43.4043                    | 183.768                        | .809                             | .727                         | .937                             |
| Measurement-X | 42.5957                    | 185.594                        | .881                             | .793                         | .930                             |
| Tools-X       | 43.0638                    | 189.670                        | .873                             | .792                         | .931                             |
| Process-X     | 43.3191                    | 188.831                        | .850                             | .784                         | .933                             |

**Table 20 Reliability test for Expert survey**

#### 4.2.2. Reliability test for the SMEs survey/ criteria rating

The same reliability analysis was carried out on the social media criteria rating scale of the SMEs survey comprising seven items. Table 21 presents the reliability test result where Cronbach's alpha showed the questionnaire to reach high reliability,  $\alpha = 0.93$ . All items are worthy of keeping, resulting in a decrease in the alpha if deleted. The Cronbach's alpha results for both surveys are very close (0.94 for the expert survey and 0.93 for the SMEs survey).

**Case Processing Summary (SMEs)**

|       |                       | N  | %     |
|-------|-----------------------|----|-------|
| Cases | Valid                 | 55 | 100.0 |
|       | Excluded <sup>a</sup> | 0  | .0    |
|       | Total                 | 55 | 100.0 |

**Reliability Statistics (SMEs)**

| Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
|------------------|--|------------|
| .934             | .935   | 7          |

**Table 21 Reliability test for SMEs survey****Item-Total Statistics (SMEs survey)**

|                 | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Squared Multiple Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|-----------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Support-SME     | 35.5273                    | 269.921                        | .723                             | .610                         | .929                             |
| Budget-SME      | 36.4545                    | 251.771                        | .836                             | .737                         | .919                             |
| Strategy-SME    | 35.7636                    | 256.517                        | .835                             | .828                         | .919                             |
| Policy-SME      | 36.6545                    | 257.119                        | .752                             | .705                         | .927                             |
| Measurement-SME | 35.7636                    | 250.665                        | .870                             | .797                         | .916                             |
| Tools-SME       | 36.1818                    | 249.929                        | .868                             | .865                         | .916                             |
| Process-SME     | 36.7455                    | 266.823                        | .635                             | .670                         | .938                             |

### 4.2.3. Demographics and descriptive statistics

After presenting the reliability results for both surveys which were very close in the Cronbach alpha score, we analysed the ratings of the maturity criteria surveys separately (experts survey result first followed by the SMEs survey result) in order to compare the final ratings of both samples. This serves as a triangulation method and making sure both sets of data show similar or close results, which increases the validity of the instrument and the items.

#### 4.2.3.1. Expert survey descriptive statistics

Table 22 demonstrates the descriptive statistics of the expert survey. The table shows that a total of 47 valid responses were received from social media experts. When it comes to the job title of the respondents, 21% are social media managers, 17% are social media specialists, and another 17% are digital marketing managers, while the rest are social media executives, strategists and academics. When it comes to location (which city the respondents live), 31% are in Riyadh, 17% are in London and 17% are in Dubai while the rest are from Mumbai, Dammam, Abu Dhabi, Jeddah and New Delhi. When it comes to experience in social media, the results show that 70% of respondents have 1 to 5 years of experience in the field of social media marketing, whereas, 29.8 % have more than five years of experience in the field of social media marketing.

| Statistics |         |         |        |
|------------|---------|---------|--------|
|            |         | Title-X | City-X |
| N          | Valid   | 47      | 47     |
|            | Missing | 0       | 0      |

| Expert survey demographics     | Count | Percentage |
|--------------------------------|-------|------------|
| <b>Position of respondents</b> |       |            |
| Academic                       | 4     | 8.5        |
| Social media strategist        | 3     | 6.4        |
| Social media specialist        | 8     | 17.0       |
| Social media manager           | 10    | 21.3       |
| Digital marketing manager      | 8     | 17.0       |
| Social media executive         | 6     | 12.8       |
| Other                          | 8     | 17.0       |
| Total                          | 47    | 100.0      |

| City                              |    |       |
|-----------------------------------|----|-------|
| London                            | 8  | 17.0  |
| Dubai                             | 8  | 17.0  |
| Riyadh                            | 15 | 31.9  |
| Jeddah                            | 7  | 14.9  |
| Mumbai                            | 2  | 4.3   |
| Other                             | 7  | 14.9  |
| Total                             | 47 | 100.0 |
| <b>Experience in social media</b> |    |       |
| 1 to 5 years                      | 33 | 70.2  |
| More than 5 years                 | 14 | 29.8  |
| Total                             | 47 | 100.0 |

Table 22 Summary of experts' survey demographics

#### 4.2.3.2. SMEs survey descriptive statistics

Regarding the demographics of the SMEs survey which has 55 valid responses, we can see in table 23 that the positions of the respondents in their companies include 41% SMEs owners, 23% are marketing managers, 12% are marketing executives, and another 12% are business managers. When it comes to which cities these companies are located, 50% are in Riyadh, 23% are in Jeddah, 9% are in Khobar, and 7% are in Dammam. When it comes to the experience in using social media in their companies, 92% have 1 to 5 years of experience whereas 7% have more than five years of experience.

| Statistics |         |      |            |
|------------|---------|------|------------|
| Title      |         | City | Experience |
| N          | Valid   | 55   | 55         |
|            | Missing | 0    | 0          |

| SMEs survey demographics       | Count | Percentage |
|--------------------------------|-------|------------|
| <b>Position of respondents</b> |       |            |
| SME owner                      | 23    | 41.8       |
| Marketing manager              | 13    | 23.6       |
| Marketing executive            | 7     | 12.7       |
| Business manager               | 7     | 12.7       |
| Other                          | 5     | 9.1        |
| Total                          | 55    | 100.0      |
| <b>City</b>                    |       |            |
| Riyadh                         | 28    | 50.9       |
| Dammam                         | 4     | 7.0        |
| Jeddah                         | 13    | 23.6       |
| Khobar                         | 5     | 9.1        |
| Other                          | 5     | 9.1        |
| Total                          | 55    | 100.0      |

| Experience in social media |    |       |
|----------------------------|----|-------|
| 1 to 5 years               | 51 | 92.7  |
| More than 5 years          | 4  | 7.3   |
| Total                      | 55 | 100.0 |

Table 23 Summary of SMEs survey demographics

#### 4.2.4. The average of the maturity criteria rating for experts and SMEs surveys

The data related to rating the seven maturity criteria was analysed. In the survey, the respondents were asked to rate seven maturity criteria based on their influence on the successful use of social media on a 10-points scale where 0 means not important and 10 means highly important. The objective of this question is to use the average number of each rating that belongs to each maturity criterion and use it as the weight for the maturity criteria and ultimately using the weight in the overall maturity calculation formula. Table 24 presents the average score in the experts' survey whereas table 25 shows the average scores in the SMEs survey. The average here is calculated based on the median because the type of the data (rating from 0 to 10) is ordinal.

Statistics- Expert survey average score for each criterion based on (Median)

|        |         | support | Budget | Strategy | Policy | Measurement | Tools  | Process |
|--------|---------|---------|--------|----------|--------|-------------|--------|---------|
| N      | Valid   | 47      | 47     | 47       | 47     | 47          | 47     | 47      |
|        | Missing | 0       | 0      | 0        | 0      | 0           | 0      | 0       |
| Mean   |         | 7.6383  | 6.9149 | 7.3830   | 6.7447 | 7.5532      | 7.0851 | 6.8298  |
| Median |         | 8.0000  | 8.0000 | 9.0000   | 8.0000 | 9.0000      | 7.0000 | 8.0000  |
| Mode   |         | 10.00   | 10.00  | 10.00    | 10.00  | 10.00       | 10.00  | 8.00    |

Table 24 Expert rating average for maturity criteria

Statistics- SMEs Survey average score for criteria ratings based on (Median)

|        |         | Support | Budget | Strategy | Policy            | Measurement | Tools  | Process           |
|--------|---------|---------|--------|----------|-------------------|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| N      | Valid   | 55      | 55     | 55       | 55                | 55          | 55     | 55                |
|        | Missing | 0       | 0      | 0        | 0                 | 0           | 0      | 0                 |
| Mean   |         | 6.6545  | 5.7273 | 6.4182   | 5.5273            | 6.4182      | 6.0000 | 5.4364            |
| Median |         | 7.0000  | 6.0000 | 7.0000   | 6.0000            | 7.0000      | 6.0000 | 6.0000            |
| Mode   |         | 10.00   | 7.00   | 7.00     | 7.00 <sup>a</sup> | 10.00       | 10.00  | 7.00 <sup>a</sup> |

Table 25 SMEs managers rating average for maturity criteria

We can see that the results are very close, for the experts' survey the median is either 8 or 9 for all criteria and 7 for (tools). On the other hand, the median in the SMEs survey is either 6 or 7 for all the criteria. It is noticeable that both surveys rating averages do not show distinct variations that could indicate weight based on the importance of each criterion to the overall maturity and both results are very close.

#### 4.2.5. Combined data (Expert & SMEs)

After examining and comparing the rating data of both experts and SMEs surveys separately, we combined the criteria rating data to measure the criteria weight from both SMEs and experts' surveys. The combined ratings resulted in a total of 102 responses. The reliability test result will be presented in the next section followed by the result of the average rating of the combined data.

##### 4.2.5.1. Reliability analysis for the combined data

A reliability analysis was carried out on the combined data (expert & SMEs surveys) comprising seven items. Cronbach's alpha showed the items to reach high reliability,  $\alpha = 0.94$ . All items are worthy of retention, resulting in a decrease in the alpha if deleted, Table 26 presents the reliability test result.

**Reliability Statistics (combined)**

| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
|------------------|------------|
| .941             | 7          |

**Table 26 Reliability test for the rating data combined**

**Item-Total Statistics**

|             | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|-------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Support     | 38.7451                    | 251.321                        | .707                             | .940                             |
| Budget      | 39.5784                    | 233.058                        | .826                             | .930                             |
| Strategy    | 38.9902                    | 231.277                        | .849                             | .928                             |
| Policy      | 39.7647                    | 232.598                        | .783                             | .934                             |
| Measurement | 38.9118                    | 230.259                        | .879                             | .925                             |
| Tools       | 39.3529                    | 231.894                        | .874                             | .926                             |
| Process     | 39.7745                    | 239.503                        | .725                             | .939                             |

##### 4.2.5.2. Statistical analysis of the average maturity criteria rating for the combined data

The combined data was analysed using SPSS to calculate the average for each criterion rating. Table 27 presents the average rating of the combined data from both SMEs and experts surveys which has 102 responses in total. As seen in the table, the median is 7 for all criteria. It is clear that these results do not show variations based on the importance of the maturity criteria to a successful use of social media, which implies that all seven maturity criteria are at the same

level of importance. Based on this result we could claim that at this stage there is not enough justification to impose a weighing system for the maturity criteria at since the average is 7 to all criteria.

**Statistics – Combined criteria rating data (Experts-SMEs)**

|        |         | Support | Budget | Strategy | Policy | Measurement | Tools  | Process |
|--------|---------|---------|--------|----------|--------|-------------|--------|---------|
| N      | Valid   | 102     | 102    | 102      | 102    | 102         | 102    | 102     |
|        | Missing | 0       | 0      | 0        | 0      | 0           | 0      | 0       |
| Mean   |         | 7.1078  | 6.2745 | 6.8627   | 6.0882 | 6.9412      | 6.5000 | 6.0784  |
| Median |         | 7.0000  | 7.0000 | 7.0000   | 7.0000 | 7.5000      | 7.0000 | 7.0000  |
| Mode   |         | 10.00   | 10.00  | 10.00    | 10.00  | 10.00       | 10.00  | 10.00   |

**Table 27 Maturity criteria ratings' average- combined data`**

#### 4.2.6. Experts agreement with the proposed social media maturity levels

The social media experts were asked the following question: In the context of small & medium companies, the following statements reflect four levels of social media progress related to the factor "Top management support to social media". On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 being I strongly disagree with the level that the statement reflects and 10 being I strongly agree with the level the statement represents, rate these statements according to the extent to which you agree with the level they reflect. Level 1 = not advanced, level 4 the most advanced. The objective of this question is to measure the agreement of the social media experts with the proposed social media levels based on the average score of each rating. In the next section, the reliability test of the experts' ratings of the levels will be presented followed by the analysis of the average score of each level.

##### 4.2.6.1. Reliability test for the social media levels rating

Using SPSS, a reliability analysis was carried out on the experts rating of the social media maturity levels comprising 28 items. Table 28 presents the Cronbach's alpha which shows the questionnaire to reach high reliability,  $\alpha = 0.95$ . The items seem to be worth keeping, resulting in a decrease in the alpha if deleted.

**Reliability Statistics**

|                  | Cronbach's Alpha<br>Based on<br>Standardized Items | N of Items |
|------------------|--|------------|
| Cronbach's Alpha | .952   | 28         |

**Table 28 Reliability test for experts' agreement with the maturity levels rating**



**Item-Total Statistics**

|      | Scale Mean if<br>Item Deleted | Scale Variance if<br>Item Deleted | Corrected Item-<br>Total Correlation | Squared Multiple<br>Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if<br>Item Deleted |
|------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| C1L1 | 165.7872                      | 3166.997                          | .619                                 | .956                            | .950                                |
| C1L2 | 164.6383                      | 3260.758                          | .439                                 | .954                            | .952                                |
| C1L3 | 163.8298                      | 3294.883                          | .403                                 | .969                            | .952                                |
| C1L4 | 163.3830                      | 3289.763                          | .458                                 | .969                            | .952                                |
| C2L1 | 165.8511                      | 3097.956                          | .730                                 | .982                            | .949                                |
| C2L2 | 165.7660                      | 3094.922                          | .733                                 | .981                            | .949                                |
| C2L3 | 164.1277                      | 3222.288                          | .599                                 | .883                            | .951                                |
| C2L4 | 163.4681                      | 3285.907                          | .422                                 | .970                            | .952                                |
| C3L1 | 165.9149                      | 3082.427                          | .803                                 | .988                            | .948                                |
| C3L2 | 164.5957                      | 3156.637                          | .745                                 | .970                            | .949                                |
| C3L3 | 164.4894                      | 3201.429                          | .652                                 | .983                            | .950                                |
| C3L4 | 163.9362                      | 3307.931                          | .330                                 | .992                            | .953                                |
| C4L1 | 165.5319                      | 3097.689                          | .823                                 | .987                            | .948                                |
| C4L2 | 165.4043                      | 3132.029                          | .726                                 | .971                            | .949                                |
| C4L3 | 164.2979                      | 3217.257                          | .598                                 | .965                            | .951                                |
| C4L4 | 164.8298                      | 3172.014                          | .692                                 | .920                            | .950                                |
| C5L1 | 165.6170                      | 3096.154                          | .781                                 | .987                            | .949                                |
| C5L2 | 164.4043                      | 3189.159                          | .643                                 | .918                            | .950                                |
| C5L3 | 163.9362                      | 3268.583                          | .554                                 | .994                            | .951                                |
| C5L4 | 164.3191                      | 3271.222                          | .428                                 | .911                            | .952                                |
| C6L1 | 165.8511                      | 3090.303                          | .761                                 | .985                            | .949                                |
| C6L2 | 163.9362                      | 3252.626                          | .541                                 | .948                            | .951                                |
| C6L3 | 164.2979                      | 3200.475                          | .733                                 | .977                            | .949                                |
| C6L4 | 164.3404                      | 3216.751                          | .625                                 | .955                            | .950                                |
| C7L1 | 165.1489                      | 3127.390                          | .709                                 | .993                            | .949                                |
| C7L2 | 163.9787                      | 3185.239                          | .713                                 | .980                            | .949                                |
| C7L3 | 164.0426                      | 3262.781                          | .591                                 | .991                            | .951                                |
| C7L4 | 164.3830                      | 3210.241                          | .647                                 | .986                            | .950                                |

#### 4.2.6.2. Statistical analysis: The extent of experts' agreement with the proposed maturity levels

Using SPSS, the average was calculated to determine the extent of experts' agreement with the maturity levels based on their ratings. Since the data type is ordinal, the median is the best representative of the average. Figure 7 gathers tables that present the average for the maturity levels of the seven criteria. The median for all levels is 5 and above which reflects a reasonable agreement with the maturity levels.

**Statistics (management support-levels)**

|        | C1L1      | C1L2   | C1L3              | C1L4   |
|--------|-----------|--------|-------------------|--------|
| N      | Valid 47  | 47     | 47                | 47     |
|        | Missing 0 | 0      | 0                 | 0      |
| Mean   | 4.9574    | 6.1064 | 6.9149            | 7.3617 |
| Median | 5.0000    | 7.0000 | 7.0000            | 8.0000 |
| Mode   | 5.00      | 9.00   | 9.00 <sup>a</sup> | 10.00  |

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

**Statistics (Budget-levels)**

|        | C2L1      | C2L2   | C2L3   | C2L4   |
|--------|-----------|--------|--------|--------|
| N      | Valid 47  | 47     | 47     | 47     |
|        | Missing 0 | 0      | 0      | 0      |
| Mean   | 4.8936    | 4.9787 | 6.6170 | 7.2766 |
| Median | 5.0000    | 5.0000 | 7.0000 | 8.0000 |
| Mode   | .00       | .00    | 10.00  | 10.00  |

**Statistics (Strategy- levels)**

|        | C3L1      | C3L2   | C3L3   | C3L4   |
|--------|-----------|--------|--------|--------|
| N      | Valid 47  | 47     | 47     | 47     |
|        | Missing 0 | 0      | 0      | 0      |
| Mean   | 4.8298    | 6.1489 | 6.2553 | 6.8085 |
| Median | 5.0000    | 7.0000 | 6.0000 | 7.0000 |
| Mode   | .00       | 10.00  | 10.00  | 10.00  |

**Statistics (Policy –levels)**

|        | C4L1      | C4L2   | C4L3              | C4L4   |
|--------|-----------|--------|-------------------|--------|
| N      | Valid 47  | 47     | 47                | 47     |
|        | Missing 0 | 0      | 0                 | 0      |
| Mean   | 5.2128    | 5.3404 | 6.4468            | 5.9149 |
| Median | 5.0000    | 7.0000 | 7.0000            | 6.0000 |
| Mode   | 10.00     | 9.00   | 9.00 <sup>a</sup> | 3.00   |

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

**Statistics (Measurement- levels)**

|        | C5L1             | C5L2   | C5L3   | C5L4   |
|--------|------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| N      | Valid 47         | 47     | 47     | 47     |
|        | Missing 0        | 0      | 0      | 0      |
| Mean   | 5.1277           | 6.3404 | 6.8085 | 6.4255 |
| Median | 5.0000           | 7.0000 | 7.0000 | 7.0000 |
| Mode   | .00 <sup>a</sup> | 10.00  | 9.00   | 9.00   |

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

**Statistics (measurement tools - levels)**

|        | C6L1      | C6L2   | C6L3   | C6L4   |
|--------|-----------|--------|--------|--------|
| N      | Valid 47  | 47     | 47     | 47     |
|        | Missing 0 | 0      | 0      | 0      |
| Mean   | 4.8936    | 6.8085 | 6.4468 | 6.4043 |
| Median | 5.0000    | 7.0000 | 7.0000 | 7.0000 |
| Mode   | .00       | 9.00   | 9.00   | 9.00   |

**Statistics (Process – levels)**

|        | C7L1      | C7L2   | C7L3   | C7L4   |
|--------|-----------|--------|--------|--------|
| N      | Valid 47  | 47     | 47     | 47     |
|        | Missing 0 | 0      | 0      | 0      |
| Mean   | 5.5957    | 6.7660 | 6.7021 | 6.3617 |
| Median | 7.0000    | 7.0000 | 7.0000 | 6.0000 |
| Mode   | 9.00      | 9.00   | 9.00   | 10.00  |

**Figure 7 Average of experts' ratings of their agreement with the maturity levels of 7 criteria**

### 4.3. Chapter summary

In this chapter, the data from research activity A was analysed and presented. The survey aimed at establishing a weight for each maturity criterion in order to use this weight in the proposed calculation formula in the final maturity model. Both experts and SMEs owners and managers were targeted in this survey. Both surveys showed high reliability. The average of the maturity criteria ratings in the combined data from the experts and SMEs based on median showed an average of 7 for all the maturity criteria. This result means that there are no variations in the importance of each criterion compared to the other criteria and therefore at this stage there is

not enough justification to impose a weighing system in the maturity calculation. Consequently, the weight part will be removed from the proposed maturity calculation as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Sum of: (score achieved for all criteria)}}{7 \text{ (the number of maturity criteria)}} = \text{The final maturity level (1/2/3/4)}$$

As far as the experts' agreement with the proposed maturity levels, based on the average (median) we claim that there is overall a good agreement with them as the median was 7 to most of the levels and no levels got lower than 5 out of 10.

Based on the findings of this study, the maturity model and calculation are finalised and therefore the analysis of SMEs maturity in the next chapter will be based on the model proposed in research activity A.

In the next chapter, the data collection process and analysis of research activity B (social media adoption and maturity in SMEs) will be presented to answer the following research questions:

- **RQ2a:** Which factors affect SMEs adoption of social media in Saudi Arabia?
- **RQ2b:** What are the objectives of using social media by SMEs in Saudi Arabia?
- **RQ2c:** What are the benefits Saudi SMEs gained from using SM?
- **RQ2d:** What are the obstacles to using SM successfully in Saudi SMEs?
- **RQ2e:** What are the barriers to social media adoption in SMEs in Saudi Arabia?
- **RQ2f:** How mature are the SMEs in Saudi Arabia and what factors are associated with the maturity?

## Chapter 5 - Research activity B – Data collection, analysis and results

### 5. Introduction

This chapter will discuss the data collection process and data analysis and findings for research activity B which aims at answering the following questions:

**RQ2a:** Which are the factors that affect SMEs adoption of social media in Saudi Arabia?

**RQ2b:** What are the objectives of using social media by Saudi SMEs?

**RQ2c:** What are the benefits Saudi SMEs gained from using SM?

**RQ2d:** What are the obstacles to using SM successfully in Saudi SMEs?

**RQ2e:** What are the barriers to social media adoption in SMEs in Saudi Arabia?

**RQ2f:** How mature are the SMEs in Saudi Arabia (based on the maturity model proposed in research activity A and what factors are associated with the maturity)?

The theoretical framework, sampling and survey development of this study were discussed in chapter 3 of this thesis. Appendix 3 presents the survey that was used for primary data collection in the current study.

This chapter will start by discussing the data collection process for research activity B, followed by a demonstration of the data analysis and findings of each section in the survey.

### 5.1. Data collection process

The data was gathered using an online survey managed during winter 2016 to spring 2017. The process was carried out in two steps. The first step, a sample of 400 small and medium-sized companies located in Saudi Arabia was identified through companies' directory website (<http://www.findsaudi.com/>), LinkedIn and Google search. A company's name and email address were identified. Contact email addresses usually belong to the owner of the company or someone in the top management.

The second step, an initial e-mailing that explained the aim of the study and a request to participate with a link to the website where the survey instrument was located, was sent to the list of SMEs contact person. A total of 71 responses from SMEs owners/ managers were received. The response rate is 17.75%. This response rate could be affected by cultural aspects concerning the Saudi SMEs managers who do not usually like to share information about their companies, and it was also one of the limitations. Moreover, the general characteristics of SMEs such as their lack of time and structure could be reasons for the low response rate.

### 5.2. Data analysis and findings

This section presents the results of the survey conducted to collect primary data from Saudi Arabian SMEs related to their social media adoption factors, barriers to adoption, benefits of using social media and the obstacles to their success in using social media. A total of 71 small and medium companies in Saudi Arabia participated in this survey. 61 companies use social media whereas 10 of these SMEs do not.

The results will be presented in 3 parts; the first part will display the results from companies that use social media whereas the second part will show the results of companies that do not use social media. Finally, the third part will discuss the data analysis and findings of the maturity test that was part of the survey.

### 5.2.1. Part 1: SMEs using social media data analysis

This section will present the data analysis of 61 small and medium-sized companies that stated they use social media. The results include demographics, social media adoption factors, networks used, effective channels, benefits and obstacles after using social media. Table 29 presents the demographics while table 30 illustrates these results.

#### 5.2.1.1. Demographics statistics of companies using social media

| Variables       |  | frequency | Percent |
|-----------------|--|-----------|---------|
| <b>City</b>     | Riyadh                                 | 32        | 52.5    |
|                 | Dammam                                 | 4         | 6.6     |
|                 | Jeddah                                 | 14        | 23.0    |
|                 | Khobar                                 | 5         | 8.2     |
|                 | Other                                  | 6         | 9.8     |
|                 | Total                                  | 61        | 100.0   |
| <b>Position</b> |  |           |         |
|                 | Owner                                  | 26        | 42.6    |
|                 | Business manager                       | 8         | 13.1    |
|                 | Marketing executive                    | 7         | 11.5    |
|                 | Social media manager                   | 13        | 21.3    |
|                 | Other                                  | 7         | 11.5    |
|                 | Total                                  | 61        | 100.0   |
| <b>Gender</b>   |  |           |         |
|                 | Male                                   | 46        | 75.4    |
|                 | Female                                 | 15        | 24.6    |
|                 | Total                                  | 61        | 100.0   |
| <b>Age</b>      |  |           |         |
|                 | Less than 18 years old                 | 5         | 8.2     |
|                 | From 18 to 24                          | 25        | 41.0    |
|                 | From 25 to 34                          | 20        | 32.8    |
|                 | From 35 to 44                          | 9         | 14.8    |
|                 | From 45 to 54                          | 2         | 3.3     |
| <b>Degree</b>   |  |           |         |
|                 | High school or less                    | 3         | 4.9     |
|                 | Certificate                            | 2         | 3.3     |
|                 | Diploma                                | 4         | 6.6     |
|                 | Bachelor's degree                      | 35        | 57.4    |
|                 | Master's degree                        | 17        | 27.9    |
|                 | Total                                  | 61        | 100.0   |
| <b>Size</b>     |  |           |         |
|                 | 1 to 5                                 | 17        | 27.9    |
|                 | 6 to 49                                | 28        | 45.9    |
|                 | 50 to 249                              | 16        | 26.2    |
|                 | Total                                  | 61        | 100.0   |
| <b>Activity</b> |  |           |         |
|                 | Wholesales                             | 2         | 3.3     |
|                 | Furniture & interior design            | 8         | 13.1    |
|                 | Constructions                          | 3         | 4.9     |
|                 | Graphic design, photography & printing | 6         | 9.8     |
|                 | Manufacturing                          | 3         | 4.9     |

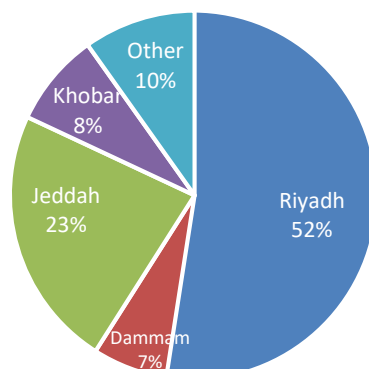
|                                   |                                      |    |       |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----|-------|
|                                   | Food & beverages                     | 12 | 19.7  |
|                                   | Software & IT                        | 3  | 4.9   |
|                                   | Hotels, travel & tourism offices     | 4  | 6.6   |
|                                   | Consulting& marketing & training     | 6  | 9.8   |
|                                   | delivery, flowers, gifts and perfume | 5  | 8.2   |
|                                   | Import/ export                       | 4  | 6.6   |
|                                   | Commercial services                  | 4  | 6.6   |
|                                   | Telecommunications                   | 1  | 1.6   |
|                                   | Total                                | 61 | 100.0 |
| <b>Established</b>                |                                      |    |       |
|                                   | 1982                                 | 1  | 1.6   |
|                                   | 1993                                 | 1  | 1.6   |
|                                   | 1994                                 | 1  | 1.6   |
|                                   | 1996                                 | 2  | 3.3   |
|                                   | 1999                                 | 1  | 1.6   |
|                                   | 2000                                 | 2  | 3.3   |
|                                   | 2002                                 | 2  | 3.3   |
|                                   | 2005                                 | 1  | 1.6   |
|                                   | 2006                                 | 3  | 4.3   |
|                                   | 2008                                 | 3  | 4.9   |
|                                   | 2009                                 | 4  | 6.6   |
|                                   | 2011                                 | 5  | 8.2   |
|                                   | 2012                                 | 6  | 9.8   |
|                                   | 2013                                 | 7  | 11.5  |
|                                   | 2014                                 | 4  | 6.6   |
|                                   | 2015                                 | 4  | 6.6   |
|                                   | 2016                                 | 11 | 18.0  |
|                                   | 2017                                 | 3  | 4.3   |
|                                   | Total                                | 61 | 100.0 |
| <b>Own website</b>                |                                      |    |       |
|                                   | Yes                                  | 40 | 65.6  |
|                                   | No                                   | 21 | 34.4  |
|                                   | Total                                | 61 | 100.0 |
| <b>Years using social media</b>   |                                      |    |       |
|                                   | Less than a year                     | 6  | 9.8   |
|                                   | 1 to 4 years                         | 38 | 62.3  |
|                                   | 5 to 9 years                         | 13 | 21.3  |
|                                   | 10 years and more                    | 4  | 6.6   |
|                                   | Total                                | 61 | 100.0 |
| <b>Hours spent on SM per week</b> |                                      |    |       |
|                                   | 0 hour                               | 1  | 1.6   |
|                                   | 1 to 20 hours                        | 41 | 67.2  |
|                                   | 21 to 40 hours                       | 18 | 29.5  |
|                                   | More than 40 hours                   | 1  | 1.6   |
|                                   | Total                                | 61 | 100.0 |

Table 29 Summary of the demographics of social media adoption and maturity survey

**City**

52% of the companies are located in Riyadh, whereas 23% are located in Jeddah. The rest of the companies are located in Dammam, Khobar, Alkharij, Buraida, Jubail, Medina, Najran and Hafr Albatin.

| Cities | frequency | Percent |
|--------|-----------|---------|
| Riyadh | 32        | 52.5    |
| Dammam | 4         | 6.6     |
| Jeddah | 14        | 23.0    |
| Khobar | 5         | 8.2     |
| Other  | 6         | 9.8     |
| Total  | 61        | 100.0   |



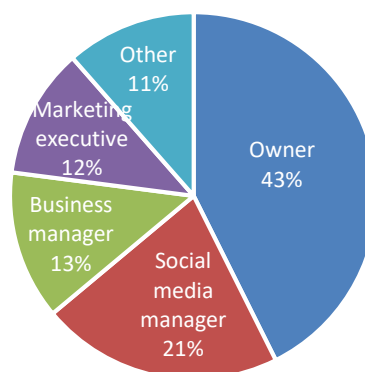
### Position

The positions of respondents vary as follows: 42% are company owners, 21% are social media managers, 13% are business managers, 11% are marketing executives and 11% other positions such as vice manager, HR, sales and IT.

| Position             | Count | Percent |
|----------------------|-------|---------|
| Owner                | 26    | 42.6    |
| Business manager     | 8     | 13.1    |
| Marketing executive  | 7     | 11.5    |
| Social media manager | 13    | 21.3    |
| Other                | 7     | 11.5    |
| Total                | 61    | 100.0   |

#### Other positions

|                      | Frequency | Percent |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|
|                      | 54        | 88.5    |
| Designer             | 1         | 1.6     |
| HR manager           | 1         | 1.6     |
| IT                   | 1         | 1.6     |
| IT manager           | 1         | 1.6     |
| Marketing manager    | 1         | 1.6     |
| Sales supervisor     | 1         | 1.6     |
| Vice manager adviser | 1         | 1.6     |
| Total                | 61        | 100.0   |

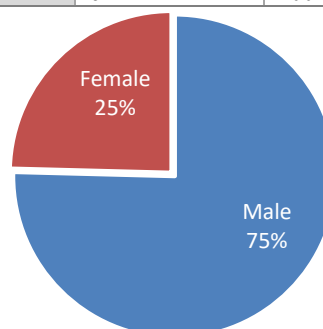




### Gender

When it comes to the gender of the respondents, we found that 75% are males whereas 25% are females.

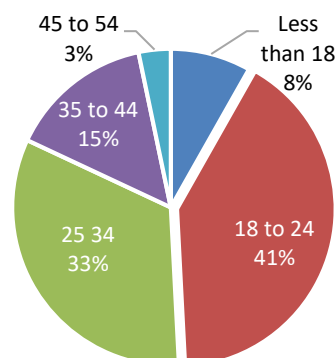
| Gender | Count | Percent |
|--------|-------|---------|
| Male   | 46    | 75.4    |
| Female | 15    | 24.6    |
| Total  | 61    | 100.0   |



### Age

In regards to the age of the respondents, 41% belong to the age group 18 to 24 whereas 32% are from 25 to 34 years old. 14% are from 35 to 44 years old, and only 3% are from 45 to 54 years old.

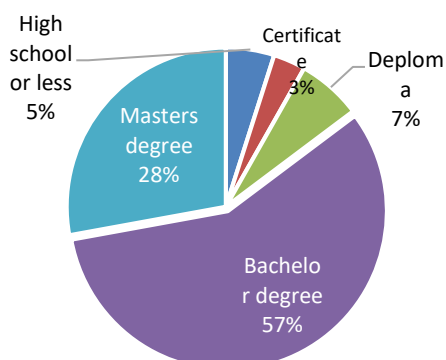
| Age                    | Count | Percent |
|------------------------|-------|---------|
| Less than 18 years old | 5     | 8.2     |
| From 18 to 24          | 25    | 41.0    |
| From 25 to 34          | 20    | 32.8    |
| From 35 to 44          | 9     | 14.8    |
| From 45 to 54          | 2     | 3.3     |



### Education

In regards to the educational level of the respondents, 57% are Bachelor degree holders whereas 27% of respondents have a Master's degrees. 6% have a Diploma, 5% have a high school degree or less, and only 3% have certificates.

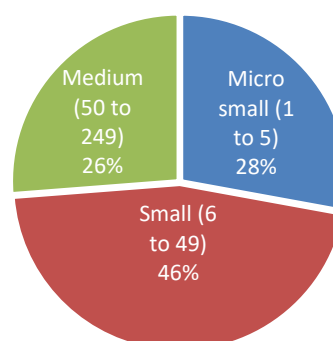
| Degree              | Count | Percent |
|---------------------|-------|---------|
| High school or less | 3     | 4.9     |
| Certificate         | 2     | 3.3     |
| Diploma             | 4     | 6.6     |
| Bachelor degree     | 35    | 57.4    |
| Master's degree     | 17    | 27.9    |
| Total               | 61    | 100.0   |



**Company's size**

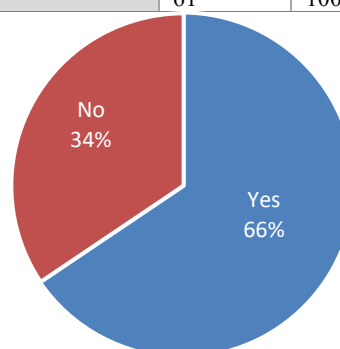
In regard to the size of the companies, 46% are small businesses (6 to 49 employees) whereas around 27.9% are micro-small businesses (1 to 5 employees). 26.2% are considered medium companies (50 to 249 employees).

| Size      | Count | Percent |
|-----------|-------|---------|
| 1 to 5    | 17    | 27.9    |
| 6 to 49   | 28    | 45.9    |
| 50 to 249 | 16    | 26.2    |
| Total     | 61    | 100.0   |

**Does the company have a website?**

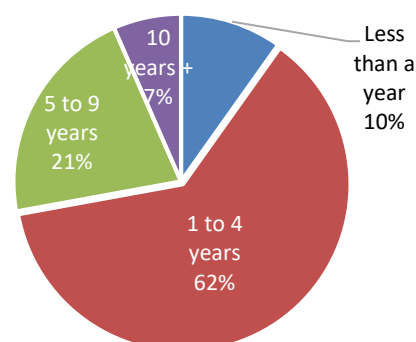
From the 61 companies 66% confirmed that they do have a website whereas 34% responded that they do not.

| Own website | Count | Percent |
|-------------|-------|---------|
| yes         | 40    | 65.6    |
| No          | 21    | 34.4    |
| Total       | 61    | 100.0   |

**Years using social media**

62% have been using social media between 1 to 4 years, whereas 21% have been using it between 5 to 9 years, 10% have been using it for less than a year, and only 6.6 use social media for 10 years or more.

| Years using social media | Count | Percent |
|--------------------------|-------|---------|
| Less than a year         | 6     | 9.8     |
| 1 to 4 years             | 38    | 62.3    |
| 5 to 9 years             | 13    | 21.3    |
| 10 years and more        | 4     | 6.6     |
| Total                    | 61    | 100.0   |



**Hours spent on social media per week**

67.2% of companies spend about 1 to 20 hours a week on social media whereas 29.5% spend around 21 to 40 hours a week. 1.6% of companies stated they do not dedicate time to social media whereas 1.6% reported they spend more than 40 hours weekly on social media.

| Hours spent        | Frequency | Percent |
|--------------------|-----------|---------|
| 0 hour             | 1         | 1.6     |
| 1 to 20 hours      | 41        | 67.2    |
| 21 to 40 hours     | 18        | 29.5    |
| More than 40 hours | 1         | 1.6     |
| Total              | 61        | 100.0   |

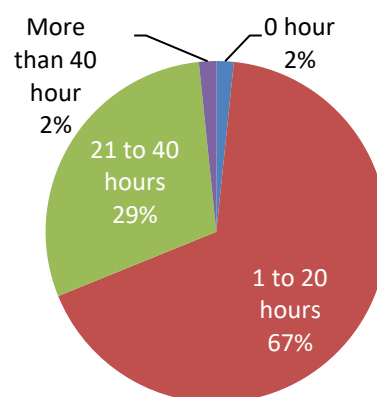


Table 30 Details of SMEs survey demographics

### 5.2.1.2. Why did your company adopt social media? (Qualitative: Open-ended question)

The companies were asked an open-ended question about why they decided to embrace social media. A total of 61 companies answered the question. The full responses are presented in appendix 6. The answers were grouped based on their similarities. Figure 8 presents a summary of the main themes related to the responses about the reasons why their companies adopted social media.

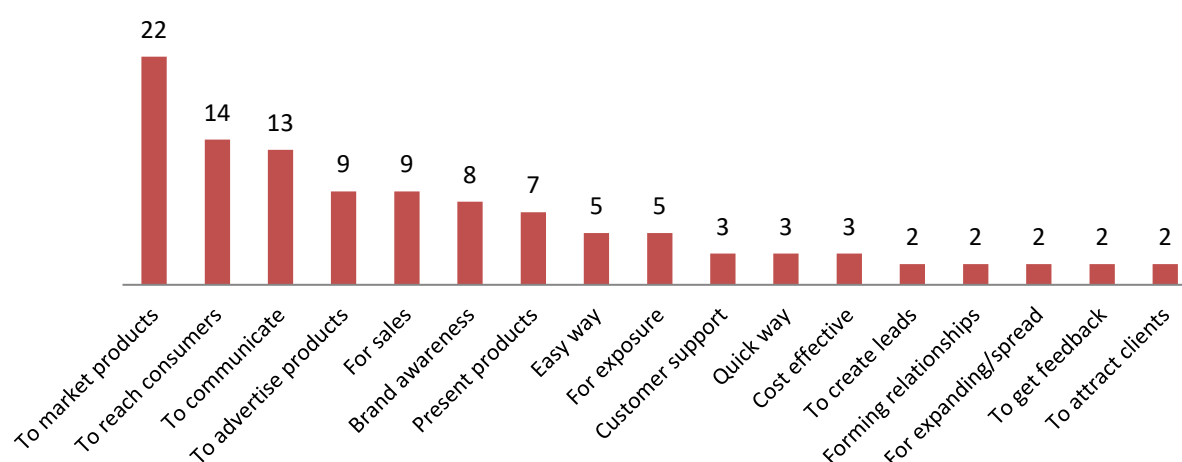
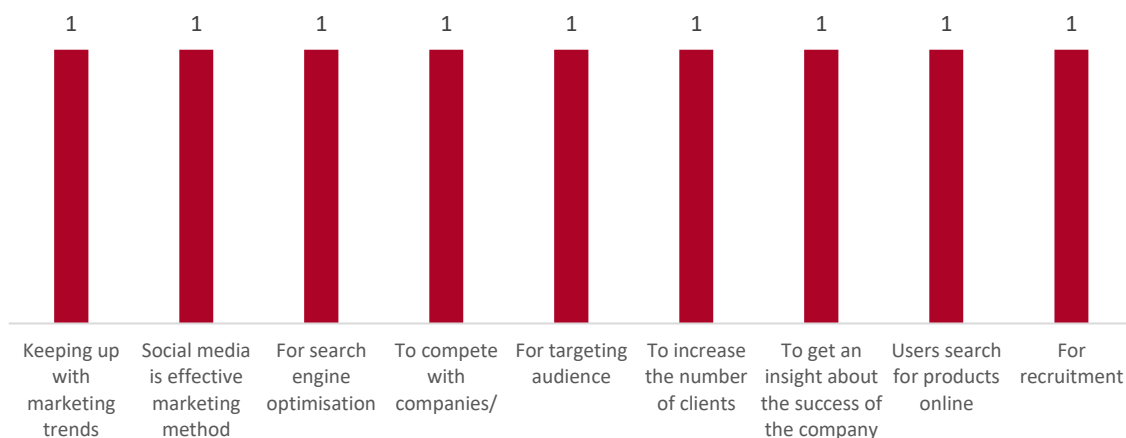


Figure 8 Summary of responses cited by SMEs for why they adopted SM

Overall, 22 companies stated that they adopted social media to market products whereas 14 companies said they adopted social media to reach consumers. 13 companies embraced social media to communicate with clients and suppliers, while nine companies utilized social media to advertise products and services. Also, nine companies said they use social media to increase their sales while eight companies stated they use social media to raise brand awareness. Seven companies said they use social media to present their products while five companies reported they adopted social media to increase the exposure to the company and five companies mentioned the easiness of marketing on social media. Three companies stated using social media for customer support, three companies use it for how quick it is in marketing, and 3 companies said they use social media because it is cost effective. Two companies decided to use social media to create leads, two companies use it to form relationships with clients and two companies mentioned adopting social media to expand and spread. Two companies stated getting a feedback as the reason for adopting social media and finally two companies said they use social media to attract potential customers. Figure 9 presents other reasons cited by the respondents for why they adopted social media.



**Figure 9 Other reasons cited by companies for why adopting SM**



### 5.2.1.3. Social media objectives from companies aligned with social media objectives from the literature

The main themes of the responses cited by the Saudi SMEs about the reason why they adopted social media in the open-ended question were aligned to the social media objectives identified from the literature. This will help shed light on the Saudi SMEs reasons for using social media and how similar/different these reasons are compared to other SMEs internationally. Table 31 presents both sources of objectives aligned.

| Social media objectives cited by Saudi small & medium companies | Count | Social media objectives from the literature |
|---|-------|---|
| • To reach consumers  | 14    | To reach target consumers                   |
| • To attract clients  | 2     |   |
| • To increase number of clients                                 | 1     |   |
| • Users search for companies online                             | 1     |   |
| • For targeting audience  | 1     |   |
| Total   | 19    |   |
| • For marketing   | 22    | Perceived usefulness of social media        |
| • To advertise products   | 9     |   |
| • Social media is effective marketing method                    | 1     |   |
| Total   | 32    |   |
| • Brand awareness   | 8     | To create brand awareness                   |
| • Present products  | 7     |   |
| • For exposure  | 5     |   |
| • To expand/spread  | 1     |   |
| Total   | 21    |   |
| • To communicate  | 13    | To engage with consumers                    |
| • To form relationships   | 2     |   |
| Total   | 15    |   |
| • To increase sales   | 9     | To generate leads                           |
| • To generate leads   | 2     |   |
| Total   | 11    |   |
| • Get insight about the success of the company                  | 1     | To get market insight                       |
| • To get feedback   | 2     |   |
| Total   | 3     |   |
| • Easy to use   | 5     | Perceived ease of use                       |
| • Customer support  | 3     | To facilitate customer support              |
| • Cost effectiveness  | 3     | Resources                                   |
| • To compete with companies                                     | 1     | Competition                                 |
| • Keeping up with marketing trends                              | 1     |   |
| • SEO   | 1     | Exposure to the website                     |
| • For recruitment   | 1     | For recruitment                             |

Table 31 Social media adoption objectives by SMEs aligned with objectives from the literature

We can see in table 26 that the majority of Saudi SMEs that participated in this study stated that the reason why they use social media is for marketing. A significant number of companies adopted social media to reach their target customers and to create brand awareness for their companies. Also, another common reason for Saudi SMEs is to engage directly with consumers, to increase sales (generate leads). Customer support is also another common reason for these SMEs. Half companies (32 SMEs) adopted social media because they believe it is a useful marketing tool. It is noticeable that from the responses so many participants gave the adjectives fast, quick, easy when describing their reasons, this can tell us that SMEs consider social media as an easy, fast, direct and cost-effective way to achieve whatever goal they stated.

#### 5.2.1.4. Social media adoption factors

The companies which stated they use social media were given 21 statements related to 10 adoption factors using 5 points Likert type scale, where strongly agree =5 and strongly disagree =1. The measured factors include Perceived usefulness, Perceived ease of use, Top management support, Business goals, Skills, Resources, External competitive pressure, Consumers' readiness, Sector and Infrastructure. The results were analysed using SPSS. The next section will present the reliability analysis of the 21 statements followed by the results of each statement.

#### 5.2.1.5. Reliability test

A reliability analysis was conducted on the social media adoption statements comprising 21 items. Cronbach's alpha showed the questionnaire to reach high reliability,  $\alpha = 0.90$ . All items are worthy of retention, resulting in a decrease in the alpha if deleted as table 32 presents.

| Reliability Statistics |  |            |
|------------------------|--|------------|
| Cronbach's Alpha       | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
| .906                   | .914   | 21         |

Table 32 Reliability test result for the social media adoption Likert scale statements

## Item-Total Statistics

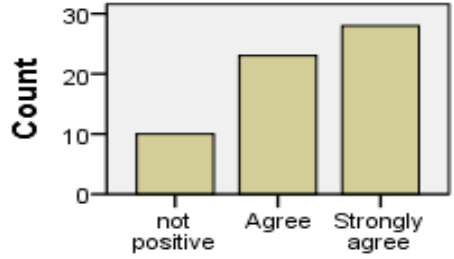
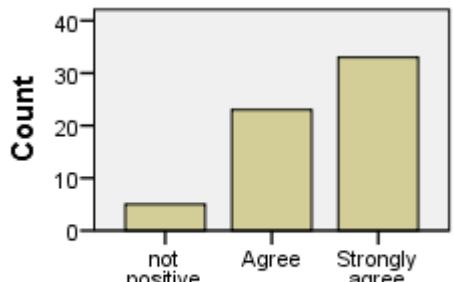
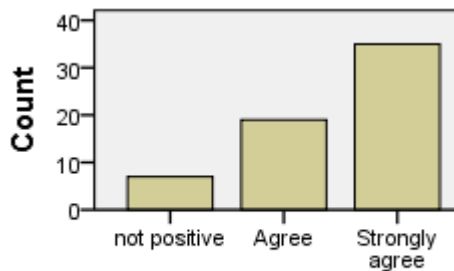

|                          | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Squared Multiple Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Usefulness 1             | 80.8852                    | 119.903                        | .695                             | .870                         | .899                             |
| Usefulness 2             | 80.7049                    | 122.478                        | .649                             | .787                         | .900                             |
| Usefulness 3             | 80.7541                    | 119.122                        | .679                             | .697                         | .899                             |
| Ease-of-use              | 80.9180                    | 122.877                        | .515                             | .476                         | .903                             |
| Top_management_support 1 | 80.9180                    | 118.077                        | .673                             | .791                         | .899                             |
| Top_management_support 2 | 80.8361                    | 119.806                        | .775                             | .842                         | .898                             |
| Top_management_support 3 | 81.0820                    | 123.810                        | .401                             | .549                         | .905                             |
| B_goals 1                | 80.9836                    | 119.616                        | .726                             | .715                         | .898                             |
| B_goals 2                | 80.7213                    | 122.571                        | .699                             | .740                         | .900                             |
| Skills 1                 | 81.0820                    | 121.777                        | .555                             | .602                         | .902                             |
| Skills 2                 | 81.1475                    | 126.761                        | .248                             | .472                         | .909                             |
| Skills 3                 | 82.1475                    | 120.428                        | .442                             | .457                         | .905                             |
| Skills4                  | 81.4426                    | 119.817                        | .512                             | .613                         | .903                             |
| Resources                | 81.6066                    | 118.443                        | .536                             | .591                         | .902                             |
| Competitive pressure 1   | 81.3443                    | 117.130                        | .663                             | .619                         | .899                             |
| Competitive pressure 2   | 81.3443                    | 123.296                        | .448                             | .443                         | .904                             |
| Competitive pressure 3   | 81.0328                    | 122.632                        | .458                             | .745                         | .904                             |
| Consumers 1              | 80.9836                    | 122.883                        | .444                             | .630                         | .904                             |
| Consumers 2              | 80.9016                    | 121.023                        | .511                             | .629                         | .903                             |
| Sector                   | 81.0328                    | 121.866                        | .439                             | .560                         | .905                             |
| Infrastructure           | 81.0820                    | 120.143                        | .485                             | .606                         | .904                             |

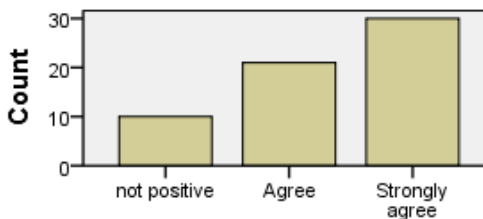
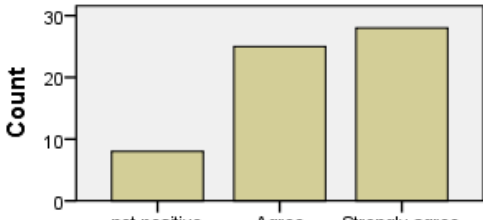
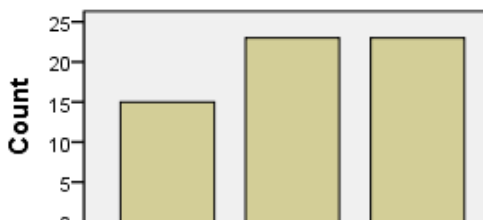
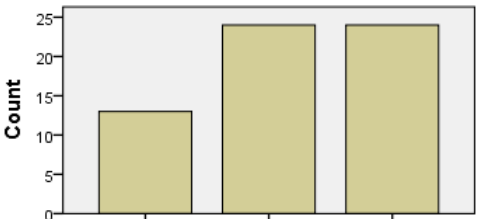
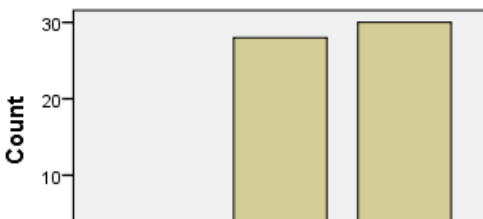
## 5.2.1.6. Social media adoption statements (Likert scale type)

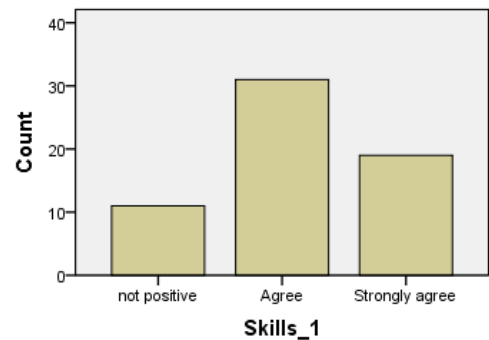
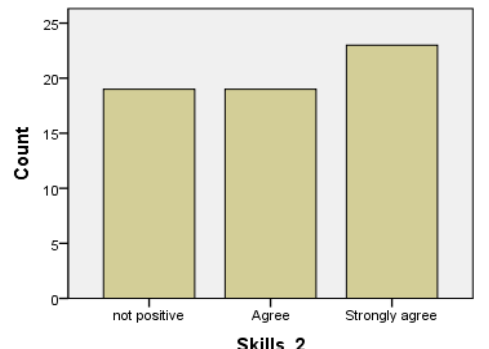
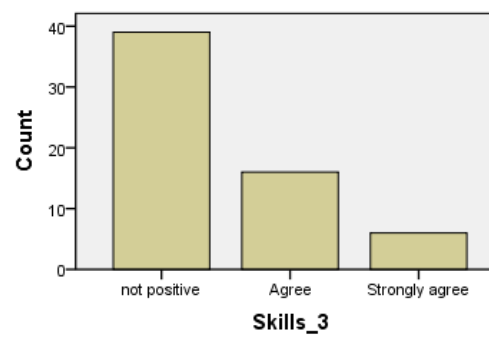

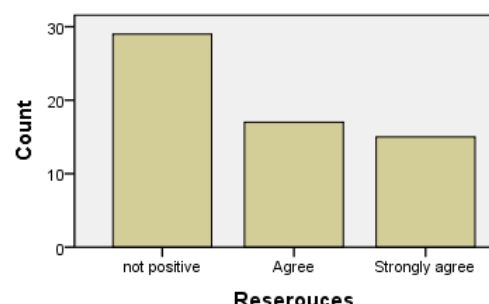
When analysing the data, we found that the majority of companies were positive towards the adoption statements, and so it was decided to group the strongly disagree, disagree and neutral in one category titled (not positive). The justification for this decision is that the number of companies that were disagreeing or strongly disagreeing was small compared to the positive items which would consequently make the statistical analysis and tests less accurate or significant. By grouping disagree, strongly disagree and neutral in one category we can have a substantial number of companies to conduct statistical analysis. Also, since the purpose of this study is to test which adoption factors exist in the Saudi SMEs, we can rely on the significant number of companies that agrees with the adoption factors statement to determine the central tendency together with the median. After grouping the three negative items and keeping the positive items as they are, table 33 presents the results of each statement with column charts illustrating the results.

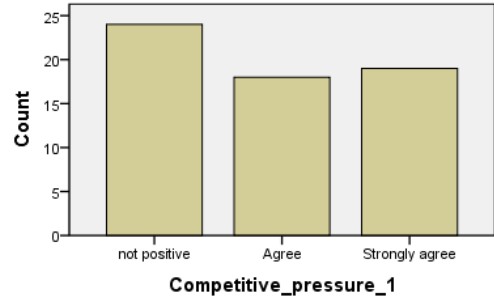
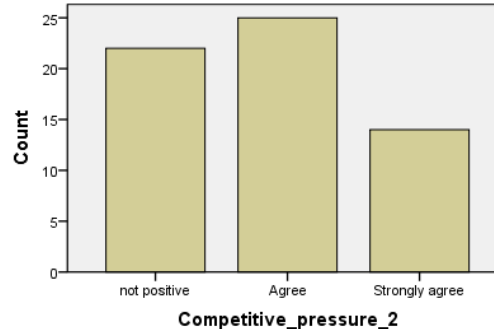
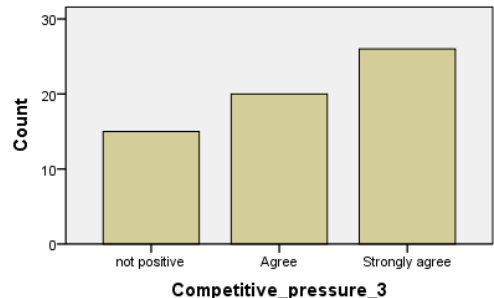
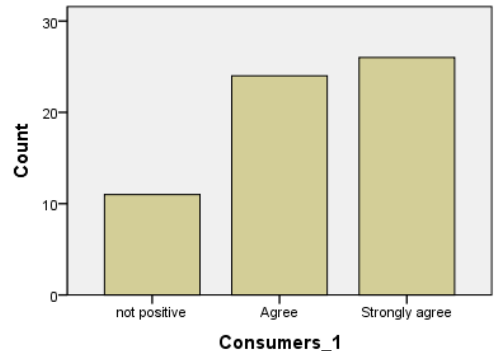
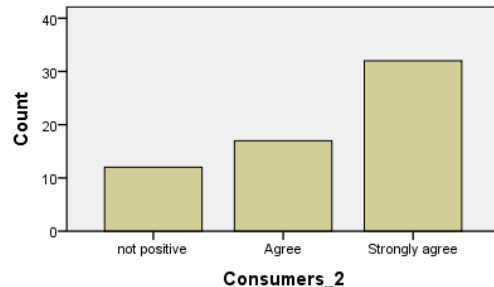


To determine the central tendency for each statement, we took the median of the three items (Not positive=1, agree=2, strongly agree=3) as according to Sullivan & Artino, (2013) "Experts over the years have argued that the median should be used as the measure of central tendency for Likert scale data".

| Factors   | Statements   | Frequency  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
|---|--|--|----------|--------------|--------------|-------|-------|----------------|----------------|----|
| Perceived usefulness  | 1. <b>Usefulness_1:</b> I believe using social media would improve my business performance   |  <table><caption>Usefulness_1</caption><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Count</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>not positive</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>Agree</td><td>24</td></tr><tr><td>Strongly agree</td><td>28</td></tr></tbody></table>  | Response | Count        | not positive | 10    | Agree | 24             | Strongly agree | 28 |
|   | Response   | Count  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
|   | not positive   | 10   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Agree   | 24   |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Strongly agree  | 28   |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| 2. <b>Usefulness_2:</b> I believe using social media would enhance my company's marketing effectiveness |  <table><caption>Usefulness_2</caption><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Count</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>not positive</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>Agree</td><td>24</td></tr><tr><td>Strongly agree</td><td>34</td></tr></tbody></table>  | Response   | Count    | not positive | 5            | Agree | 24    | Strongly agree | 34             |    |
| Response  | Count  |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| not positive  | 5  |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Agree   | 24   |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Strongly agree  | 34   |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| 3. <b>Usefulness_3:</b> I find social media useful for my business                                      |  <table><caption>Usefulness_3</caption><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Count</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>not positive</td><td>8</td></tr><tr><td>Agree</td><td>19</td></tr><tr><td>Strongly agree</td><td>36</td></tr></tbody></table> | Response   | Count    | not positive | 8            | Agree | 19    | Strongly agree | 36             |    |
| Response  | Count  |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| not positive  | 8  |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Agree   | 19   |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Strongly agree  | 36   |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Perceived ease of use   | 4. <b>Ease-of-use:</b> I would find social media easy to use in marketing  |  <table><caption>Ease_of_use</caption><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Count</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>not positive</td><td>12</td></tr><tr><td>Agree</td><td>24</td></tr><tr><td>Strongly agree</td><td>28</td></tr></tbody></table> | Response | Count        | not positive | 12    | Agree | 24             | Strongly agree | 28 |
| Response  | Count  |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| not positive  | 12   |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Agree   | 24   |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Strongly agree  | 28   |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |

| Top management support   | 5. <b>Top_management-support_1:</b> Top management in my company is interested in adopting social media   |  <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Count</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>not positive</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>Agree</td><td>21</td></tr><tr><td>Strongly agree</td><td>30</td></tr></tbody></table> <p><b>Top_management-support_1</b></p> | Response | Count        | not positive | 10    | Agree | 21             | Strongly agree | 30 |
|--|---|--|----------|--------------|--------------|-------|-------|----------------|----------------|----|
|  | Response  | Count  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
|  | not positive  | 10   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Agree  | 21  |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Strongly agree   | 30  |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| 6. <b>Top_management_support_2:</b> Top management in my company (or the owner) strongly supports the adoption of social media |  <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Count</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>not positive</td><td>8</td></tr><tr><td>Agree</td><td>25</td></tr><tr><td>Strongly agree</td><td>28</td></tr></tbody></table> <p><b>Top_management-support_2</b></p>   | Response   | Count    | not positive | 8            | Agree | 25    | Strongly agree | 28             |    |
| Response   | Count   |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| not positive   | 8   |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Agree  | 25  |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Strongly agree   | 28  |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| 7. <b>Top_management_support_3:</b> Top management in my company (or the owner) is involved in the social media process        |  <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Count</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>not positive</td><td>15</td></tr><tr><td>Agree</td><td>23</td></tr><tr><td>Strongly agree</td><td>23</td></tr></tbody></table> <p><b>Top_management-support_3</b></p> | Response   | Count    | not positive | 15           | Agree | 23    | Strongly agree | 23             |    |
| Response   | Count   |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| not positive   | 15  |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Agree  | 23  |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Strongly agree   | 23  |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Business goals   | 8. <b>B_goals_1:</b> Social media is consistent with the core business goals of my company  |  <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Count</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>not positive</td><td>13</td></tr><tr><td>Agree</td><td>24</td></tr><tr><td>Strongly agree</td><td>24</td></tr></tbody></table> <p><b>B_goals_1</b></p>              | Response | Count        | not positive | 13    | Agree | 24             | Strongly agree | 24 |
|  | Response  | Count  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| not positive   | 13  |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Agree  | 24  |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Strongly agree   | 24  |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| 9. <b>B_golas_2:</b> Social media can help achieve some of my company's business goals   |  <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Count</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>not positive</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Agree</td><td>28</td></tr><tr><td>Strongly agree</td><td>30</td></tr></tbody></table> <p><b>B_goals_2</b></p>                | Response   | Count    | not positive | 3            | Agree | 28    | Strongly agree | 30             |    |
| Response   | Count   |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| not positive   | 3   |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Agree  | 28  |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Strongly agree   | 30  |  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |

| Skills   | 10. <b>Skills_1:</b> The team working on social media in my company has excellent skills and knowledge in using social media  |  <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Count</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>not positive</td><td>11</td></tr><tr><td>Agree</td><td>31</td></tr><tr><td>Strongly agree</td><td>19</td></tr></tbody></table>   | Response | Count        | not positive | 11    | Agree | 31             | Strongly agree | 19 |
|--|---|---|----------|--------------|--------------|-------|-------|----------------|----------------|----|
|  | Response  | Count   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
|  | not positive  | 11  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
|  | Agree   | 31  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Strongly agree   | 19  |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| 11. <b>Skills_2:</b> There is a need for social media training in my company to improve the skills and knowledge of social media |  <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Count</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>not positive</td><td>19</td></tr><tr><td>Agree</td><td>19</td></tr><tr><td>Strongly agree</td><td>23</td></tr></tbody></table>   | Response  | Count    | not positive | 19           | Agree | 19    | Strongly agree | 23             |    |
| Response   | Count   |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| not positive   | 19  |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Agree  | 19  |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Strongly agree   | 23  |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| 12. <b>Skills_3:</b> My company provides social media training to its employees  |  <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Count</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>not positive</td><td>39</td></tr><tr><td>Agree</td><td>16</td></tr><tr><td>Strongly agree</td><td>6</td></tr></tbody></table>   | Response  | Count    | not positive | 39           | Agree | 16    | Strongly agree | 6              |    |
| Response   | Count   |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| not positive   | 39  |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Agree  | 16  |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Strongly agree   | 6   |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| 13. <b>Skills_4:</b> The owner/ top management has a good knowledge in social media  |  <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Count</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>not positive</td><td>23</td></tr><tr><td>Agree</td><td>22</td></tr><tr><td>Strongly agree</td><td>16</td></tr></tbody></table> | Response  | Count    | not positive | 23           | Agree | 22    | Strongly agree | 16             |    |
| Response   | Count   |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| not positive   | 23  |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Agree  | 22  |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Strongly agree   | 16  |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Resources  | 14. <b>Resources:</b> My company has the financial resources to adopt social media  |  <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Count</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>not positive</td><td>29</td></tr><tr><td>Agree</td><td>17</td></tr><tr><td>Strongly agree</td><td>15</td></tr></tbody></table> | Response | Count        | not positive | 29    | Agree | 17             | Strongly agree | 15 |
| Response   | Count   |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| not positive   | 29  |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Agree  | 17  |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Strongly agree   | 15  |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |

| External competitive pressure  | 15. <b>Competitive_pressure_1:</b><br>Competition with other companies in my sector is a factor in my company's decision to adopt social media  |  <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Count</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>not positive</td><td>24</td></tr><tr><td>Agree</td><td>18</td></tr><tr><td>Strongly agree</td><td>19</td></tr></tbody></table>   | Response | Count        | not positive | 24    | Agree | 18             | Strongly agree | 19 |
|--|---|---|----------|--------------|--------------|-------|-------|----------------|----------------|----|
|  | Response  | Count   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
|  | not positive  | 24  |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Agree  | 18  |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Strongly agree   | 19  |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| 16. <b>Competitive_pressure_2:</b> There is a pressure on my company to adopt social media to stay competitive in the market         |  <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Count</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>not positive</td><td>22</td></tr><tr><td>Agree</td><td>25</td></tr><tr><td>Strongly agree</td><td>14</td></tr></tbody></table>   | Response  | Count    | not positive | 22           | Agree | 25    | Strongly agree | 14             |    |
| Response   | Count   |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| not positive   | 22  |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Agree  | 25  |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Strongly agree   | 14  |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| 17. <b>Competitive_pressure_3:</b> Many of our competitors use social media  |  <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Count</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>not positive</td><td>15</td></tr><tr><td>Agree</td><td>20</td></tr><tr><td>Strongly agree</td><td>26</td></tr></tbody></table>  | Response  | Count    | not positive | 15           | Agree | 20    | Strongly agree | 26             |    |
| Response   | Count   |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| not positive   | 15  |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Agree  | 20  |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Strongly agree   | 26  |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Consumers readiness  | 18. <b>Consumers_1:</b> I believe that primary and /or secondary segments of our targeted consumers are social media users  |  <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Count</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>not positive</td><td>11</td></tr><tr><td>Agree</td><td>24</td></tr><tr><td>Strongly agree</td><td>26</td></tr></tbody></table> | Response | Count        | not positive | 11    | Agree | 24             | Strongly agree | 26 |
|  | Response  | Count   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| not positive   | 11  |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Agree  | 24  |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Strongly agree   | 26  |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| 19. <b>Consumers_2:</b> Reaching the consumers who are social media users is a factor in my company's decision to adopt social media |  <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Count</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>not positive</td><td>12</td></tr><tr><td>Agree</td><td>17</td></tr><tr><td>Strongly agree</td><td>32</td></tr></tbody></table> | Response  | Count    | not positive | 12           | Agree | 17    | Strongly agree | 32             |    |
| Response   | Count   |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| not positive   | 12  |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Agree  | 17  |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |
| Strongly agree   | 32  |   |          |              |              |       |       |                |                |    |

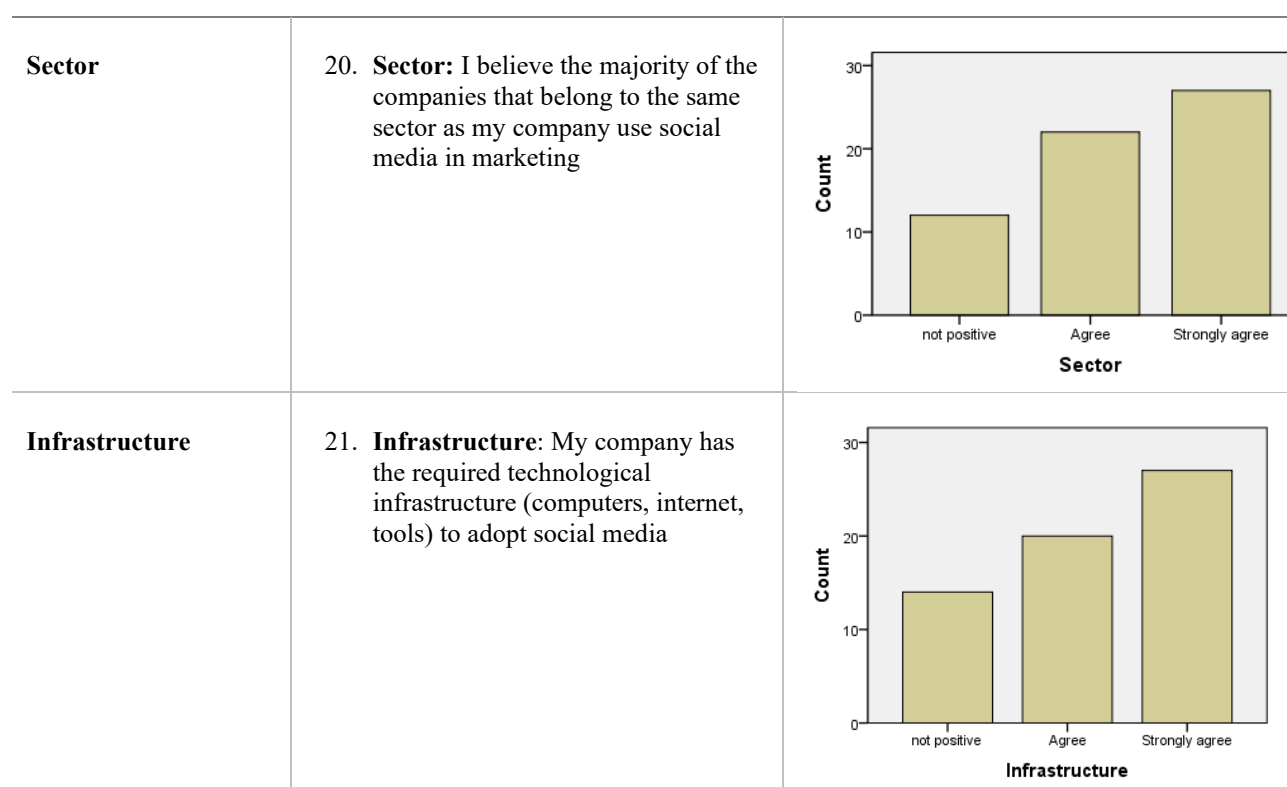


Table 33 Social media adoption Likert scale statements results

#### 5.2.1.7. Statistical analysis of social media adoption factors (central tendency: median and mode)

Table 34 below summarises the data analysis of the average Likert type scale response for each adoption statement. SPSS was used to analyse the data where the average will be based on the median as the data type is ordinal. 1= not positive, 2= agree, 3=strongly agree.

| Adoption factors statements  | Median | Mode |
|--|--------|------|
| Usefulness_1: I believe using social media would improve my business performance                                     | 2      | 3    |
| Usefulness_2: I believe using social media would enhance my company's marketing effectiveness                        | 3      | 3    |
| Usefulness_3: I find social media useful for my business   | 3      | 3    |
| Ease-of-use: I would find social media easy to use in marketing  | 2      | 3    |
| Top_management_support_1: Top management in my company is interested in adopting social media                        | 2      | 3    |
| Top_management_support_2: Top management in my company (or the owner) strongly supports the adoption of social media | 2      | 3    |
| Top_management_support_3: Top management in my company (or the owner) is involved in the social media process        | 2      | 2    |
| B_goals_1: Social media is consistent with the core business goals of my company                                     | 2      | 2    |

|  |                 |                 |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|
| B_goals_2: Social media can help achieve some of my company's business goals]  | 2               | 3               |
| Skills_1: The team working on social media in my company has excellent skills and knowledge in using social media                | 2               | 2               |
| Skills_2: There is a need for social media training in my company to improve the skills and knowledge of social media            | 2               | 3               |
| Skills_3: My company provides social media training to its employees   | 1= not positive | 1= not positive |
| Skills_4: The owner/ top management has a good knowledge in social media   | 2               | 1= not positive |
| Resources: My company has the financial resources to adopt social media  | 2               | 1= not positive |
| Competitive_pressure_1: Competition with other companies in my sector is a factor in my company's decision to adopt social media | 2               | 2               |
| Competitive_pressure_2: There is a pressure on my company to adopt social media to stay competitive in the market                | 2               | 3               |
| Competitive_pressure_3: Many of our competitors use social media   | 2               | 3               |
| Consumers_1: I believe that primary and /or secondary segments of our targeted consumers are social media users                  | 2               | 3               |
| Consumers_2: Reaching the consumers who are social media users is a factor in my company's decision to adopt social media        | 3               | 3               |
| Sector: I believe the majority of the companies that belong to the same sector as my company use social media in marketing       | 2               | 3               |
| Infrastructure: My company has the required technological infrastructure (computers, internet, tools) to adopt social media      | 2               | 3               |

Table 34 Social media adoption factors average based on median

## Statistics- Average response of adoption statements (median/ 3 points Likert scale)

|         | Usefulness_1 | Usefulness_2 | Usefulness_3 | Ease_of_use | Top_management support 1 | Top_management support 2 | Top_management support 3 |
|---------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| N Valid | 61           | 61           | 61           | 61          | 61                       | 61                       | 61                       |
| Missing | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0           | 0                        | 0                        | 0                        |
| Mean    | 2.2951       | 2.4590       | 2.4590       | 2.2623      | 2.3279                   | 2.3279                   | 2.1311                   |
| Median  | 2.0000       | 3.0000       | 3.0000       | 2.0000      | 2.0000                   | 2.0000                   | 2.0000                   |
| Mode    | 3.00         | 3.00         | 3.00         | 3.00        | 3.00                     | 3.00                     | 2.00 <sup>a</sup>        |

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

Table 35 Central tendency analysis for the social media adoption statements (3 statements)

## Statistics- Average response of adoption statements (median/ 3 points Likert scale)

|         | B_goals_1         | B_goals_2 | Skills_1 | Skills_2 | Skills_3 | Skills_4 | Resources |
|---------|-------------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| N Valid | 61                | 61        | 61       | 61       | 61       | 61       | 61        |
| Missing | 0                 | 0         | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0         |
| Mean    | 2.1803            | 2.4426    | 2.1311   | 2.0656   | 1.4590   | 1.8852   | 1.7705    |
| Median  | 2.0000            | 2.0000    | 2.0000   | 2.0000   | 1.0000   | 2.0000   | 2.0000    |
| Mode    | 2.00 <sup>a</sup> | 3.00      | 2.00     | 3.00     | 1.00     | 1.00     | 1.00      |

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

Table 36 Statistics- Average response of adoption statements (median/ 3 points Likert scale)

**Statistics- Average response of adoption statements (median/ 3 points Likert scale)**

|        |         | Competitive_p<br>ressure 1 | Competitive_p<br>ressure 2 | Competitive_p<br>ressure 3 | Consumers_<br>1 | Consumers 2 | Sector | Infrastructu<br>re |
|--------|---------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------|--------|--------------------|
| N      | Valid   | 61                         | 61                         | 61                         | 61              | 61          | 61     | 61                 |
|        | Missing | 0                          | 0                          | 0                          | 0               | 0           | 0      | 0                  |
| Mean   |         | 1.9180                     | 1.8689                     | 2.1803                     | 2.2459          | 2.3279      | 2.2459 | 2.2131             |
| Median |         | 2.0000                     | 2.0000                     | 2.0000                     | 2.0000          | 3.0000      | 2.0000 | 2.0000             |
| Mode   |         | 1.00                       | 2.00                       | 3.00                       | 3.00            | 3.00        | 3.00   | 3.00               |

**Table 37 Average response of adoption statements (median/ 3 points Likert scale)****Statistics- Average response of adoption statements (median/ 5 points Likert scale))**

|                |         | Usefulness 1 | Usefulness 2 | Usuefulness 3 | Ease of use |
|----------------|---------|--------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|
| N              | Valid   | 61           | 61           | 61            | 61          |
|                | Missing | 0            | 0            | 0             | 0           |
| Mean           |         | 4.2623       | 4.4426       | 4.3934        | 4.2295      |
| Median         |         | 4.0000       | 5.0000       | 5.0000        | 4.0000      |
| Mode           |         | 5.00         | 5.00         | 5.00          | 5.00        |
| Std. Deviation |         | .81449       | .69581       | .88088        | .82449      |

**Table 38 Average response of adoption statements (median/ 5 points Likert scale))****Statistics- Average response of adoption statements (median/ 5 points Likert scale))**

|                |         | Usefulness 1 | Usefulness 2 | Usuefulness 3 | Ease of use |
|----------------|---------|--------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|
| N              | Valid   | 61           | 61           | 61            | 61          |
|                | Missing | 0            | 0            | 0             | 0           |
| Mean           |         | 4.2623       | 4.4426       | 4.3934        | 4.2295      |
| Median         |         | 4.0000       | 5.0000       | 5.0000        | 4.0000      |
| Mode           |         | 5.00         | 5.00         | 5.00          | 5.00        |
| Std. Deviation |         | .81449       | .69581       | .88088        | .82449      |

**Table 39 Average response of adoption statements (median/ 5 points Likert scale)****Statistics - Average response of adoption statements (median/ 5 points Likert scale)**

|        |         | Top_management<br>support 1 | Top_management_<br>support 2 | Top_management_<br>support 3 | B_goals_1 | B_goals_2 |
|--------|---------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| N      | Valid   | 61                          | 61                           | 61                           | 61        | 61        |
|        | Missing | 0                           | 0                            | 0                            | 0         | 0         |
| Mean   |         | 4.2295                      | 4.3115                       | 4.0656                       | 4.1639    | 4.4262    |
| Median |         | 4.0000                      | 4.0000                       | 4.0000                       | 4.0000    | 4.0000    |
| Mode   |         | 5.00                        | 5.00                         | 4.00a                        | 4.00a     | 5.00      |

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

**Table 40 Average response of adoption statements (median/ 5 points Likert scale)****Statistics- Average response of adoption statements (median/ 5 points Likert scale)**

|        |         | Skills_1 | Skills_2 | Skills_3 | Skills4 | Resources | Competitive_<br>pressure 1 | Competitive_pr<br>essure 2 | Competitive_pr<br>essure 3 |
|--------|---------|----------|----------|----------|---------|-----------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| N      | Valid   | 61       | 61       | 61       | 61      | 61        | 61                         | 61                         | 61                         |
|        | Missing | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0       | 0         | 0                          | 0                          | 0                          |
| Mean   |         | 4.0656   | 4.0000   | 3.0000   | 3.7049  | 3.5410    | 3.8033                     | 3.8033                     | 4.1148                     |
| Median |         | 4.0000   | 4.0000   | 3.0000   | 4.0000  | 4.0000    | 4.0000                     | 4.0000                     | 4.0000                     |
| Mode   |         | 4.00     | 5.00     | 3.00     | 4.00    | 3.00a     | 5.00                       | 4.00                       | 5.00                       |

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

**Table 41 Average response of adoption statements (median/ 5 points Likert scale)****Statistics- Average response of adoption statements (median/ 5 points Likert scale)**

|        |         | Consumers 1 | Consumers 2 | Sector | Infrastructure |
|--------|---------|-------------|-------------|--------|----------------|
| N      | Valid   | 61          | 61          | 61     | 61             |
|        | Missing | 0           | 0           | 0      | 0              |
| Mean   |         | 4.1639      | 4.2459      | 4.1148 | 4.0656         |
| Median |         | 4.0000      | 5.0000      | 4.0000 | 4.0000         |
| Mode   |         | 5.00        | 5.00        | 5.00   | 5.00           |

**Table 42 Average response of adoption statements (median/ 5 points Likert scale)**

As seen in table 29 the median for all factors is either 2 (agree) or 3 (strongly agree). The only exception is for the statement (skills 3) which is related to the availability of social media training in the company; the median for that statement is 1 (not positive). Since skills3 (providing social media training in the company) shows an average of "not positive", this factor was investigated further by performing a chi-square test of association to identify what factors are associated with it and this will be discussed in the Chi-square test section later on in this chapter. We can conclude that perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, top management support, business goals, skills, resources, external competitive pressure, consumers' readiness, sector, and infrastructure exist in the majority of the SMEs. The only exception is related to the statement (skills 3) which has an average of 1 (not positive).

#### 5.2.1.8. Social media networks that companies have accounts on:

Figure 11 presents the social media networks used by companies. We can see that in this study, Twitter, Instagram and Facebook respectively are the most used networks by small and medium companies. 95% of the SMEs stated they have accounts on Twitter. 85% said they have an account on Instagram while more than 70% indicated they have account on Facebook. The least used social media channel by companies is Pinterest with only 5.5% stating they have an account on it. Also, LinkedIn is the second least used social media network as only 21.8% said

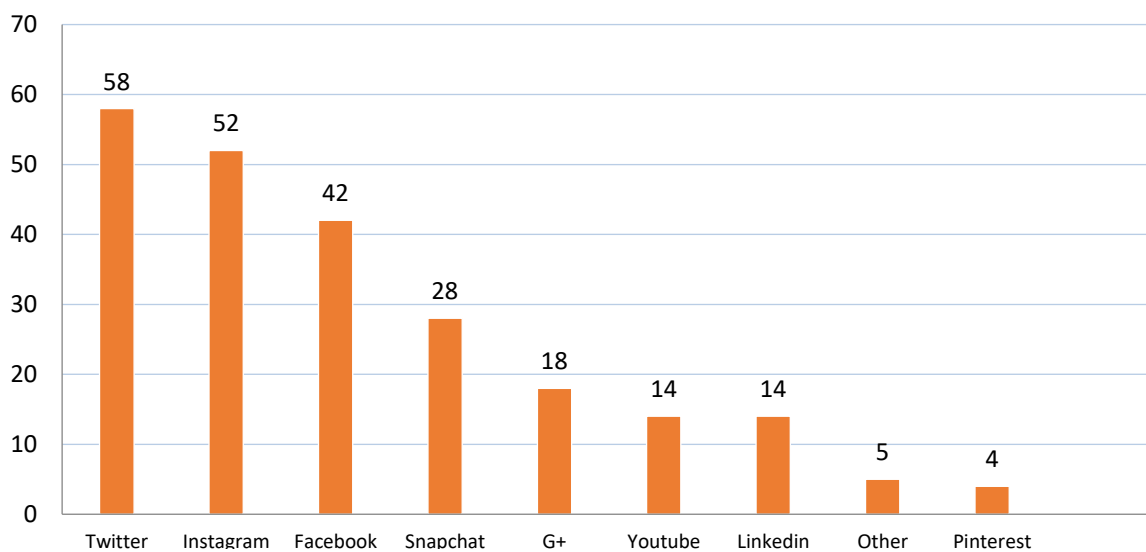


Figure 11 Social media used by SMEs



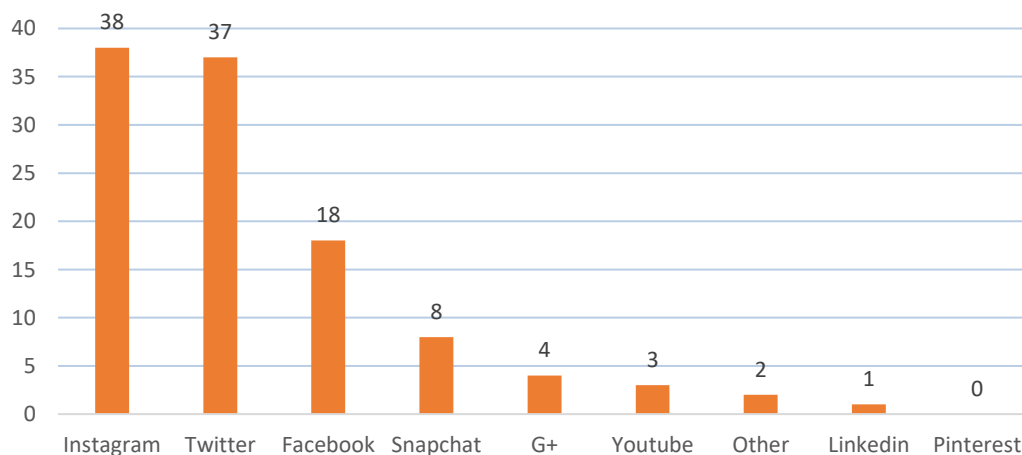
they use it followed by YouTube with about 23% of the companies stating they have an account on it. 7% reported they use other social media networks such as Ali Baba, Akafi, Telegram, Behance, Trip adviser and Foursquare as shown in the table 43.

| Other social media |                         | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|--------------------|-------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| Valid              |                         | 56        | 91.8    | 91.8          |
|                    | Ali baba, Akafi         | 1         | 1.6     | 1.6           |
|                    | Flickr, Tumblr          | 1         | 1.6     | 1.6           |
|                    | Google Adwards          | 1         | 1.6     | 1.6           |
|                    | Telegram, Behance       | 1         | 1.6     | 1.6           |
|                    | Tripadviser, Foursquare | 1         | 1.6     | 1.6           |
|                    | Total                   | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |

**Table 43 Other social media mentioned by SMEs**

#### 5.2.1.9. The most useful social media network for the companies

Figure 12 shows the most effective social media accounts according to the companies. 61.8% stated that Instagram is the most useful social media networks for their business followed by Twitter with 60% said it is the most valuable social media channel. Also, Facebook is the third most useful network for these companies according to 31% of the respondents. 14% think that Snapchat is the most helpful network for their business.



**Figure 12 Most effective social media networks for SMEs**

On the other hand, the least useful social media account according to the respondents is Pinterest with no companies stating it is useful. The second least helpful network is LinkedIn with almost 2% reported it is useful. Also, YouTube was the third not effective network for

these companies with only 3% saying it is. 3% mentioned other useful social media networks for their companies such as Alibaba, Akafi and Google Adwards as presented in the table 44.

| Other effective social media | Frequency | Percent |
|------------------------------|-----------|---------|
|                              | 59        | 96.7    |
| Alibaba, Akafi               | 1         | 1.6     |
| Google Adwards               | 1         | 1.6     |
| Total                        | 61        | 100.0   |

**Table 44 Other effective social media networks mentioned by SMEs**

#### 5.2.1.10. The social media objectives that the companies try to achieve:

Figure 13 presents the companies' objectives for using social media, 20 companies stated using social media to reach their target consumers which is also most responses. Using social media to create brand awareness was the objective for 15 companies. 9 companies stated they use social media to engage with their consumers, whereas 7 companies indicated they use social media to facilitate support for their consumers. 5 companies said they use social media to generate leads and 3 companies use social media to create exposure to their website.



**Figure 13 Objectives for using social media according to SMEs**

| Other objectives  | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|
|                   | 59        | 95.1    |
| All the mentioned | 1         | 1.6     |
| Critic management | 1         | 1.6     |
| Total             | 61        | 100.0   |

**Table 45 Other objectives mentioned by the respondents**

### 5.2.1.11. The benefits that the companies gained from using social media:

Figure 14 below presents the benefits gained from using social media according to the respondents. We can see that 16 companies stated that social media helped increase the exposure to their companies whereas 13 companies said social media increased their companies' sales. Another 11 companies reported that social media increased the number of their loyal customers while 5 companies said it provided them with marketplace insights. 4 companies stated that social media helped reduce marketing expenses and 3 other companies said social media helped in growing business partnerships. Also, social media improved the company's ranking on the search engines according to 3 companies. 2 companies indicated that social media generated leads. Table 46 presents the other benefits cited by SMEs which include one SME stating there were no benefits from using social media in their company.

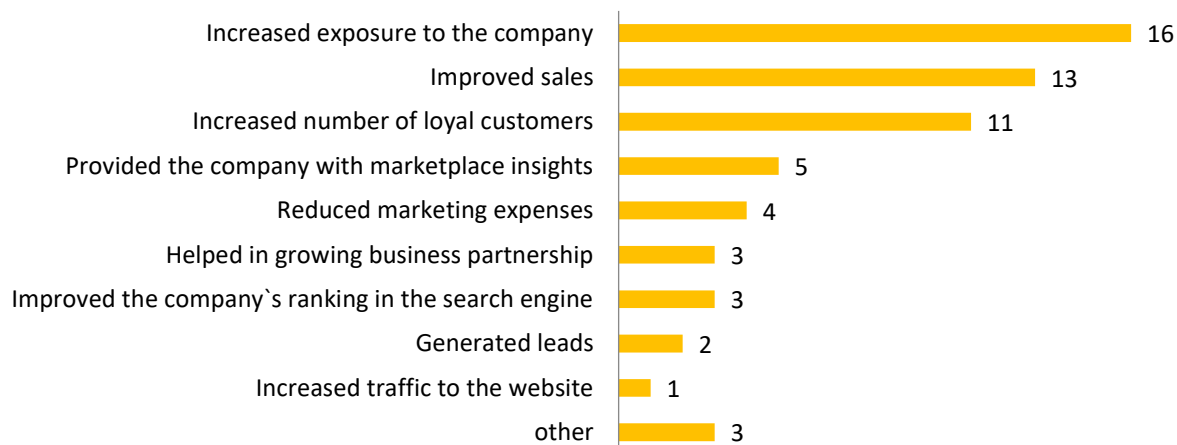


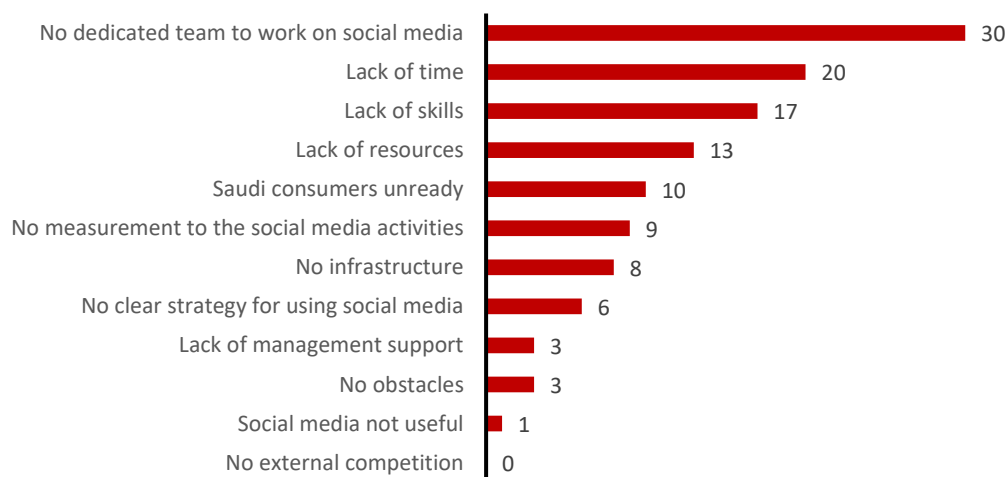
Figure 14 The benefits gained from social media by SMEs

| Other benefits    | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|
|                   | 58        | 95.1    |
| All the mentioned | 1         | 1.6     |
| Interaction       | 1         | 1.6     |
| No benefit        | 1         | 1.6     |
| Total             | 61        | 100.0   |

Table 46 Other benefits mentioned by companies

### 5.2.1.12. The obstacles to using social media successfully in these companies

When it comes to the challenges that inhibit the Saudi SMEs from succeeding in their use of social media, we can see in figure 15 that half companies stated that not having a team dedicated to working on social media is an obstacle towards succeeding. 20 companies said that lack of time is a significant obstacle. 17 companies believe that lack of skills is a barrier whereas 13 companies reported that lack of resources is an issue towards success in using social media. 10 companies think that the non-readiness of Saudi consumers to interact with brands on social media is a problem while 9 companies stated that not measuring their social media performance is a reason for failing in their use of social media. Not having the infrastructure for social media is an obstacle for 8 companies whereas 6 companies said it is an issue not having a strategy for social media. Only 3 companies blamed the lack of management support while other 3 firms said there are no obstacles.



**Figure 15** The obstacles towards success in using social media by SMEs

### 5.3. Chi-square test of association

To understand more the relationships between the data presented in the previous sections, the chi-square test was used to measure the associations between the adoption factors,

demographics, obstacles and social media accounts used. Tables 47, 48 and 49 present the significant associations between these different sets of variables.

### 5.3.1. Chi-square test of association between demographics and adoption factors

| Variables                            | Social media adoption factors | Chi-square test P | Value |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|-------|
| <b>Position</b>                      | Top management support 1      | .002              | 23.98 |
|                                      | Business goals 1              | .022              | 17.85 |
| <b>Age</b>                           | Usefulness 3                  | .014              | 19.25 |
| <b>Degree</b>                        | Usefulness 1                  | .033              | 16.76 |
|                                      | Usefulness 3                  | .003              | 23.36 |
| <b>Size</b>                          | Top management support 3      | .023              | 14.66 |
| <b>Website</b>                       | Infrastructure                | .014              | 8.55  |
| <b>Years using social media</b>      | Business goals 1              | .020              | 14.99 |
| <b>Hours dedicated for SM weekly</b> | Perceived usefulness 2        | .023              | 14.63 |
|                                      | Skills 2                      | .043              | 13.02 |
| <b>Lack of time</b>                  | Competitive pressure 1        | .016              | 8.218 |
| <b>No team</b>                       | Competitive pressure 3        | .031              | 6.97  |
| <b>Consumers unready</b>             | Business goals 2              | .039              | 6.47  |
| <b>Lack of resources</b>             | Infrastructure                | .011              | 9.02  |
| <b>Not useful</b>                    | Perceived usefulness 2        | .003              | 11.38 |
|                                      | Top management support 2      | .034              | 6.73  |

Table 47 Chi-square test significant results between social media adoption statements and demographics variables

Table 47 shows that perceived usefulness of social media is significantly associated with the position of the respondents, age, educational degrees, hours dedicated for social media and the non-usefulness of social media as an obstacle. Also, the consistency of social media with the business goals is associated with the position, years using social media and the non-readiness of Saudi consumers as an obstacle. Top management support of social media is associated with the position, size of the company and non-usefulness of social media as an obstacle. The availability of social media infrastructure in the company is associated with owning a website and lack of resources as an obstacle. As far as the external competitive pressure to adopt social media is associated with the obstacles lack of time and lack of team.

### 5.3.2. Chi-square test between social media accounts, website and demographics

| Social media/website         | Demographic Variables   | Chi-square test p | Chi-square test value |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Having Pinterest account     | Gender                  | .043              | 5.866                 |
| Having twitter account       | Age                     | .029              | 10.769                |
|                              | Business activity       | .023              | 23.576                |
|                              | Hours spent             | .000              | 22.982                |
| Having website               | Google +                | .012              | 6.149                 |
|                              | Facebook                | .011              | 6.733                 |
|                              | YouTube                 | .043              | 3.920                 |
|                              | City                    | .012              | 12.837                |
|                              | Social media accounts   | .038              | 4.552                 |
| Having social media accounts | Activity of the company | .000              | 44.55                 |

Table 48 Chi-square test significant results between social media/website and demographics

Table 48 shows that having a Pinterest account is associated with gender. Having a Twitter account is associated with age, the business activity and the number of hours dedicated for social media weekly. When it comes to having a website in the company, we found that it is associated with the city, using social media and using specifically the following social media accounts: Google+, Facebook, and YouTube. And finally, having social media accounts is associated with the activity of companies.

### 5.3.3. Chi-square test of association between effective SM and demographics

| Variable 1                 | Variable 2                  | Chi-square test p | Chi-square test value |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Effectiveness of YouTube   | Business activity           | .005              | 28.031                |
|                            | Years using social media    | .032              | 8.771                 |
|                            | Hours spent on social media | .000              | 19.940                |
|                            | Age                         | .027              | 10.959                |
| Effectiveness of Instagram | Years using social media    | .016              | 10.268                |

Table 49 Chi-square test significant results between effective SM and demographics

Table 49 shows that there is statistically significant association between the effectiveness of YouTube according to companies and the following variables: Business activity, years using social media, hours dedicated for social media weekly and age.

Moreover, the effectiveness of Instagram is significantly associated with the number of years the company uses social media.

#### 5.3.4. Chi-square test of association between providing training in the company (Skills 3) and other variables

|   | variables   | p    | Value  |
|---|---|------|--------|
| <b>(Skills 3) Providing social media training</b> | Owner/manager has a good knowledge of social media (Skills 4) | .001 | 18.37  |
|   | Resources   | .000 | 21.125 |
|   | Infrastructure  | .012 | 12.81  |
|   | Perceived usefulness 1  | .002 | 17.12  |
|   | Sector  | .025 | 11.14  |
|   | Competitive pressure 1  | .004 | 15.11  |
|   | Competitive pressure 2  | .003 | 15.77  |
|   | Perceived ease of use   | .042 | 9.90   |

Table 50 (Skills 3) chi-square test results with adoption, demographics and other variables

Since the average response to the adoption statement skills 3 (providing social media training in the company) was the only adoption statement that was not positive on average, a chi-square test was conducted to investigate the association between this statement with other demographical and adoption variable. The result in table 50 shows that there is a significant positive association between skills 3 and the variables skills 4 (the owner/manager knowledge of social media) and the availability of resources in the company. Also, there is an association between skills 3 and the availability of social media infrastructure in the company, the sector, the competitive pressure, the perceived usefulness and ease of use of social media.

#### 5.3.5. Illustration of the most significant chi-square test associations

The association results above are illustrated in the graphs below in order to understand further the form of these significant associations.

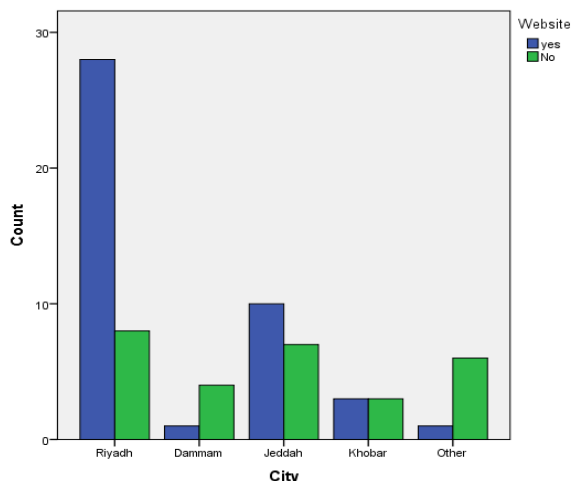


Figure 16 The association between having a website and City

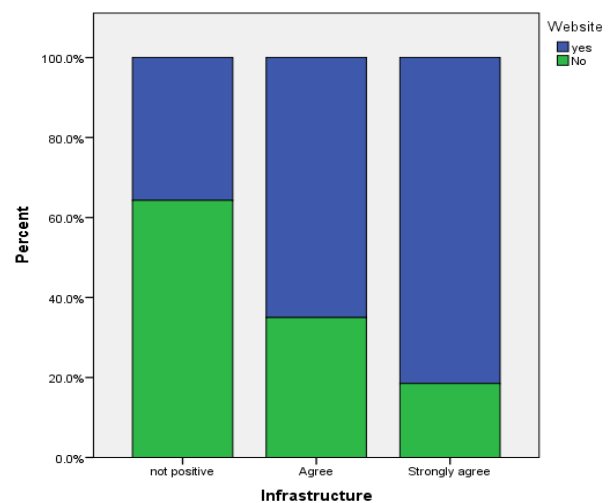


Figure 17 Association between having website and infrastructure

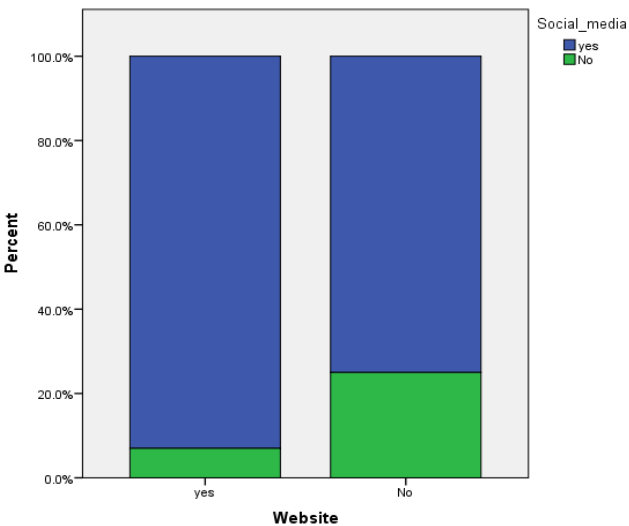


Figure 22 Association between website and social media

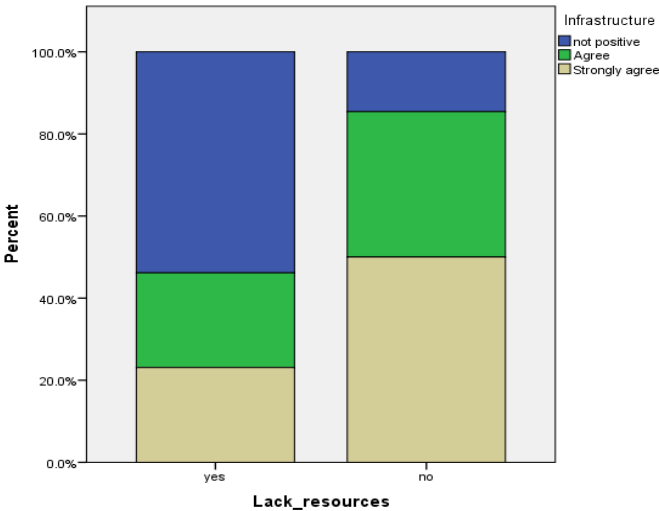


Figure 21 Association between lack of resources and infrastructure

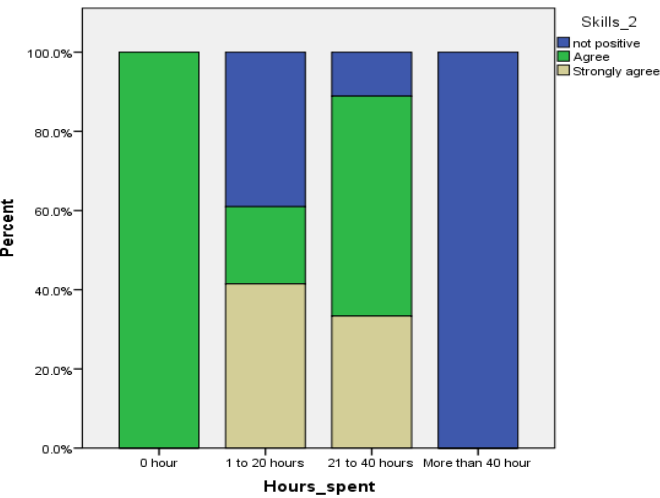


Figure 18 Association between hours spend on social media and skills

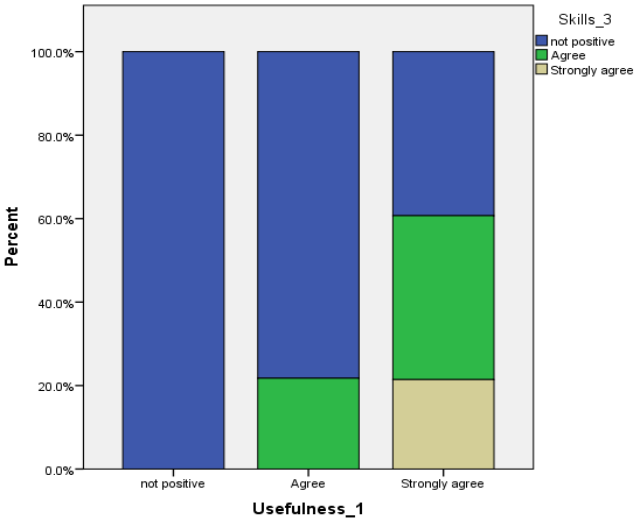


Figure 19 Association between perceived usefulness of SM and providing SM training

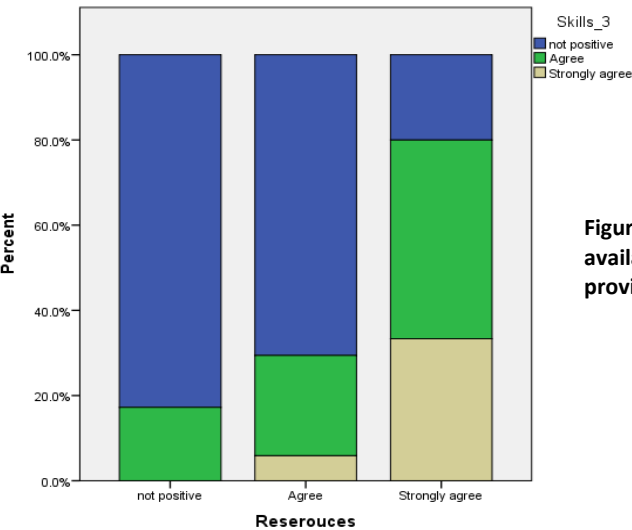


Figure 20 Association between availability of resources and providing SM training



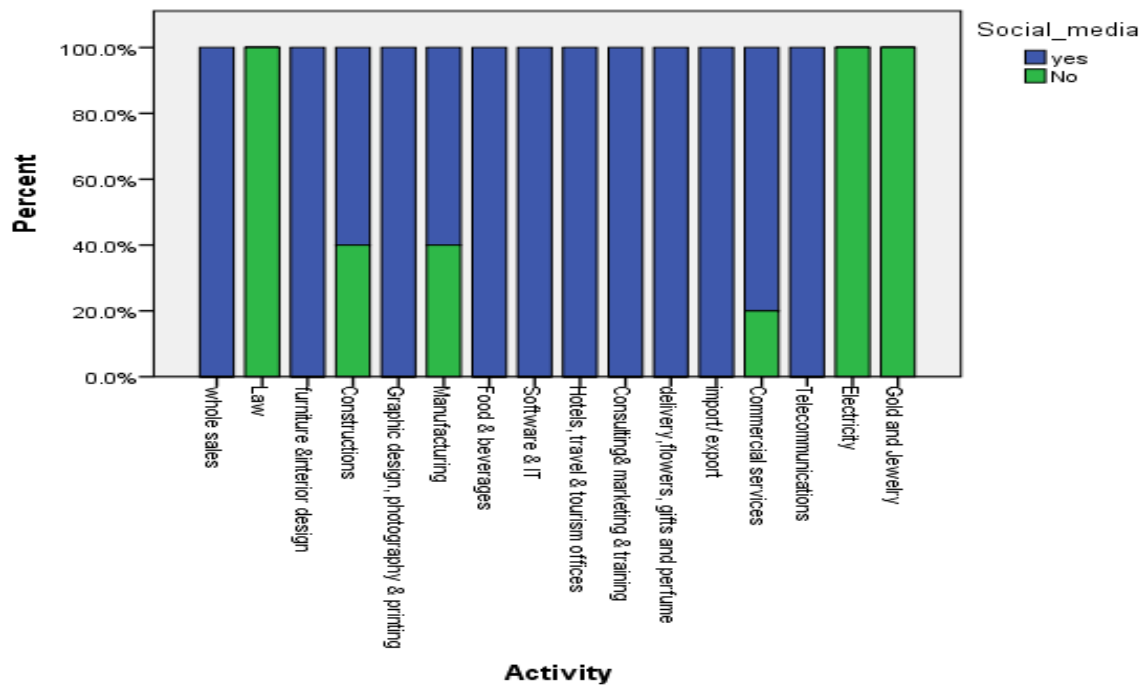


Figure 23 associations between SMEs activity and having SM

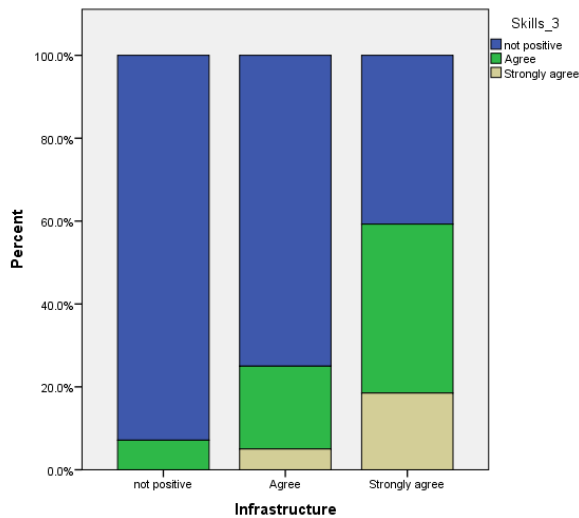


Figure 24 Associations between availability of infrastructure and SM providing training

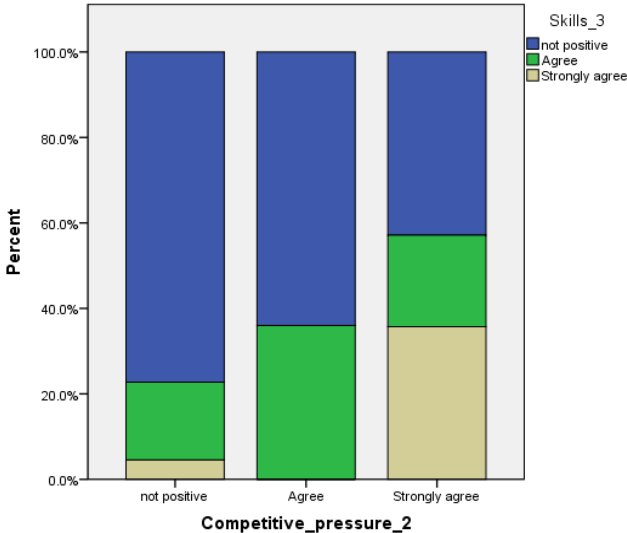


Figure 25 Associations between competitive pressure and providing training

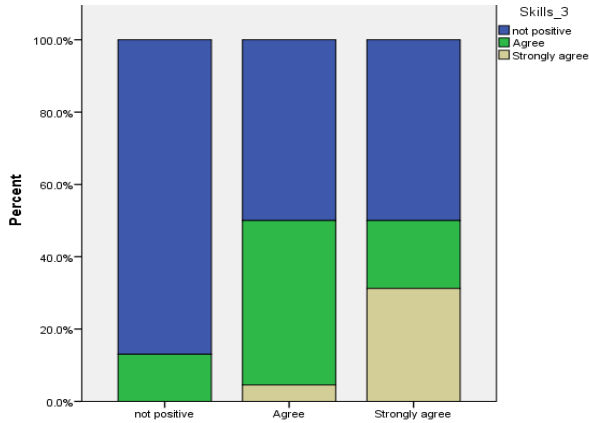


Figure 27 Associations between skills4 and skills 3

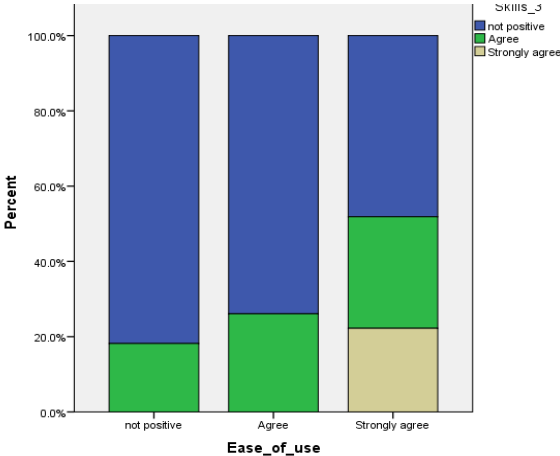


Figure 26 Associations between ease of use and skills 3

## 5.4. Part 2: Companies that do not use social media

In this section, the analysis of the data from the companies that don't use social media will be presented and discussed starting by a review of the demographics. Followed by the reason why these companies did not adopt social media. Also, if these companies plan to use social media in the future and if they do, why would they adopt social media?

### 5.4.1. Descriptive statistics

Table 51 presents a summary of the demographics of the 10 companies that do not use social media.

| Variables |                     | frequency | Percent |
|-----------|---------------------|-----------|---------|
| City      | Riyadh              | 4         | 40      |
|           | Dammam              | 1         | 10      |
|           | Jeddah              | 3         | 30      |
|           | Khobar              | 1         | 10      |
|           | Other               | 1         | 10      |
|           | Total               | 10        | 100.0   |
| Position  |                     |           |         |
| Valid     | Owner               | 5         | 50      |
|           | Business manager    | 2         | 20      |
|           | Marketing executive | 1         | 10      |
|           | Other               | 2         | 20      |
|           | Total               | 10        | 100.0   |
| Gender    | Male                | 10        | 100     |
|           | Total               | 10        | 100.0   |
| Age       |                     |           |         |
|           | From 18 to 24       | 3         | 30      |
|           | From 25 to 34       | 4         | 40      |
|           | From 35 to 44       | 3         | 30      |
|           | Total               | 10        | 100.0   |
| Degree    |                     |           |         |
|           | High school or less | 2         | 20      |
|           | Certificate         | 1         | 10      |
|           | Diploma             | 2         | 20      |
|           | Bachelor degree     | 2         | 20      |
|           | Master's degree     | 2         | 20      |
|           | Other               | 1         | 10      |
|           | Total               | 10        | 100.0   |
| Size      |                     |           |         |
|           | 1 to 5              | 1         | 10      |
|           | 6 to 49             | 8         | 80      |
|           | 50 to 249           | 1         | 10      |
|           | Total               | 10        | 100     |
| Activity  |                     |           |         |
|           | Law                 | 2         | 20      |
|           | Constructions       | 3         | 30      |
|           | Manufacturing       | 2         | 20      |

|                      |                     |    |       |
|----------------------|---------------------|----|-------|
|                      | Commercial services | 1  | 10    |
|                      | Electricity         | 1  | 10    |
|                      | Gold & jewellery    | 1  | 10    |
|                      | Total               | 10 | 100   |
| <b>Established</b>   |                     |    |       |
|                      | 00                  | 1  |       |
|                      | 1992                | 1  | 1.6   |
|                      | 2002                | 1  | 1.6   |
|                      | 2011                | 1  | 3.3   |
|                      | 2014                | 5  | 3.3   |
|                      | 2015                | 1  | 1.6   |
|                      | Total               | 10 | 100.0 |
| <b>Own a website</b> |                     |    |       |
|                      | Yes                 | 4  | 40    |
|                      | No                  | 6  | 60    |
|                      | Total               | 10 | 100.0 |

Table 51 Summary of demographics of companies that don't use SM

- **City:**

Out of 71 SMEs that participated in this study, ten companies stated they do not have social media accounts. 4 out of these ten companies are located in Riyadh the capital of Saudi Arabia. 3 companies are in Jeddah, one company from Dammam, another company from Khobar and one from Madinah.

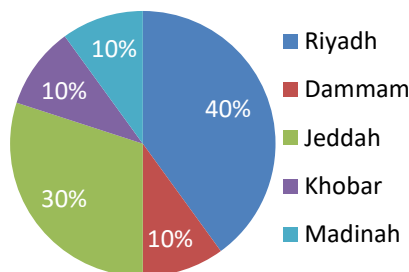


Figure 28 City of non-users on social media

- **Position:**

When it comes to the positions of the respondents, 5 stated that they are company owners, 2 are business managers, and 1 is marketing executive, 1 is HR and 1 in in Administration.

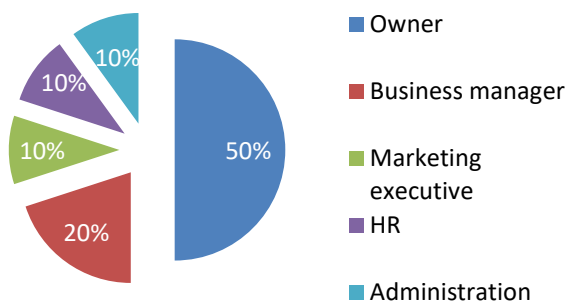
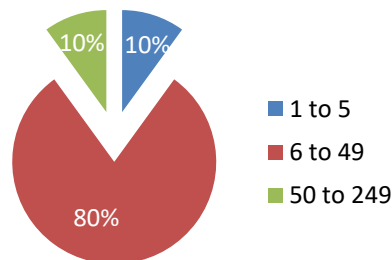


Figure 29 The position of respondents

All the respondents are males. 2 have high school or less, two stated having a diploma, another two said they have Bachelor degree; Also 2 have Master's degree.

- Size:



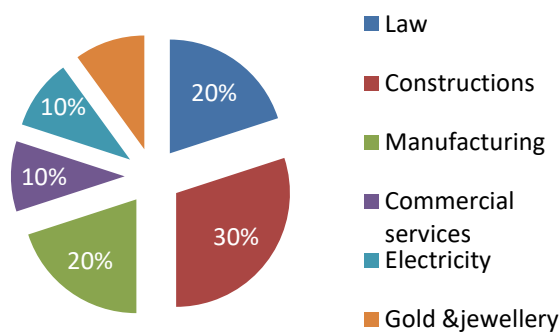
**Figure 30 Size of companies**

When it comes to the size of these companies, eight companies are small (6 to 49 employees), whereas one is a micro-small company (1 to 5 employees) and lastly, one is a medium company (50 to 249 employees).

In regard to when were these companies established, five companies were founded in 2014, one company in 2011, one company in 2002, one company in 1992 and lastly, one in 2015.

- Business activity

In regard to the commercial activity of these companies, three of them belong to the construction sector; two are manufacturing companies, two law firms, one electricity company, and one gold and Jewellery shop.



**Figure 31 Business activities**

### 5.4.2. Does your company have a website?

When asked if these SMEs own a website, four companies stated they own one whereas six companies said they don't have a website.

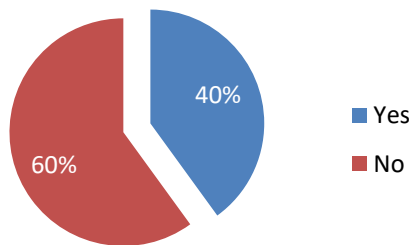


Figure 32 Do SMEs use a website

### 5.4.3. The reasons for not using social media

The ten companies that don't use social media were asked the following open-ended question:

What is/are the reason(s) for not using social media in your company?

The responses varied as follows:

- *"None"*
- *"It is not useful."*
- *"Lawyers are not allowed to advertise according to the law."*
- *"Lack of knowledge in social media."*
- *"Lack of specialised experts in this field."*
- *"We deal directly with clients."*
- *"Lack of need for marketing in the company."*
- *"The type of products we offer targets a specific segment and require visiting the client and present directly to them."*
- *"Did not think of it."*

When looking at the responses, we can see some themes; five companies perceive social media as non-useful for their type of business, while the type of business that does not require using social media was mentioned 3 times by 3 companies. Also, lack of knowledge and skills were mentioned twice by two companies as the reason for not using social media. As a result, we can summarise the answers above as follows:

- Lack of perceived usefulness
- Type of business (sector) does not require social media marketing
- Lack of knowledge, skills, and expertise in using social media.

These three themes are all adoption factors that were supported by the literature.

#### 5.4.4. Which of the following factors is a reason for not adopting social media in your company?

The companies were asked the same previous open-ended question but using the multiple-choice method. The responses include: Lack of time, inadequate company infrastructure for social media, insufficient skills and knowledge in social media, no dedicated social media team, perceived lack of readiness of Saudi consumers to interact with companies on social media, Lack of financial resources (budget) for social media, insufficient top management support, low perceived usefulness, no use of social media by competitors, the sector does not require social media use.

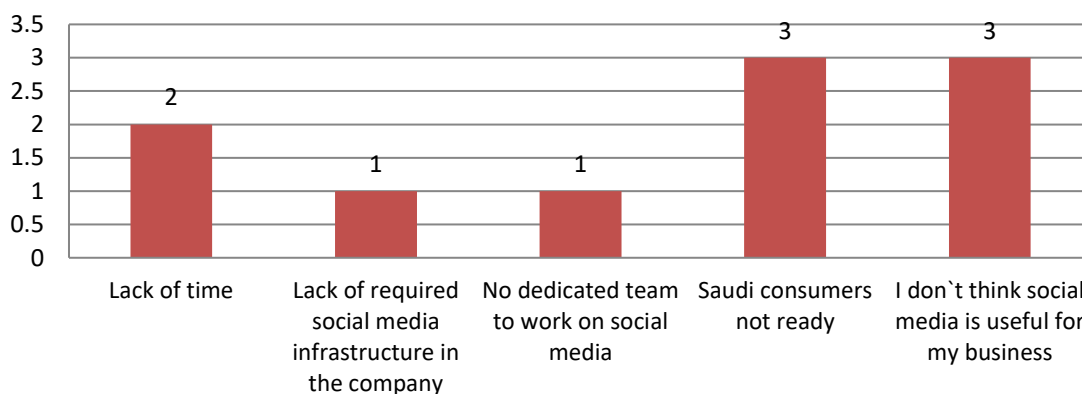


Figure 33 The responses SMEs chose as a reason for not adopting social media

Figure 33 presents the result which shows that three companies out of 10 stated that they don't think social media is useful for their business; another three companies said Saudi consumers are not ready. Two companies out of 10 stated lack of time, one company blamed lack of infrastructure in the company, and another company stated that the reason is lack of a dedicated team to work on social media.

#### 5.4.5. Does your company plan to use social media in the future?

The companies were asked if they plan to use social media in the future, and the responses varied. 4 companies out of 10 said yes, they plan to adopt social media in the future; 5 companies stated they do not know and only one company out of 10 said they do not intend to use social media in the future.

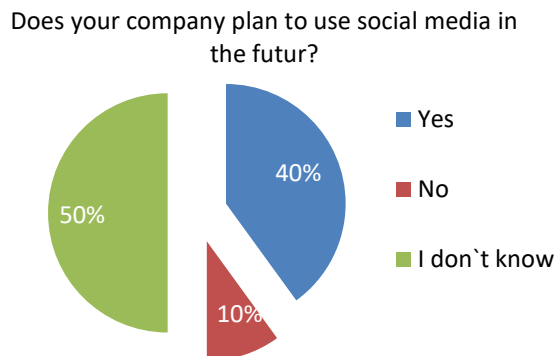


Figure 34 Do they plan to use social media

#### 5.4.6. Why is your company planning to use social media? (Open ended question)

The four companies that stated they plan to use social media in the future answered an open-ended question about the reasons for their decision to use social media. The responses varied as follows:

- *"It is the fastest way to marketing."*
- *"It became the easiest and the most popular."*
- *"It is the common trend nowadays."*
- *"To connect clients to international conferences and keep them up to date with tech."*

From these four responses, we can see that the reasons were related to the perceived usefulness of social media: "It is the fastest way to marketing"; "It became the easiest and the most popular". Also, some were related to external competition and sector: "It is the common trend nowadays" while one is related to supporting the customers: "To connect clients to international

conferences and keep them up to date with tech". All these factors are supported by the literature, and they were part of the social media adoption factors.

### 5.5. Part 3: Findings of social media maturity of SMEs in Saudi Arabia

This section will present the data analysis of the social media maturity test that was part of the survey that collected data from SMEs in Saudi Arabia. This maturity test is based on the maturity assessment model that was developed in research activity A. The SMEs took the maturity test as shown in the survey in appendix 3. The maturity test questions are based on the seven maturity criteria and four levels of maturity as seen in appendix 1. One of the objectives of this research is to investigate the social media maturity of the Saudi SMEs and to explore the associations of this maturity with other variables. More specifically, the objective to answer the following research question:

**RQ2f:** How mature are the SMEs in Saudi Arabia (based on the proposed maturity model) and what factors are associated with the maturity?

The results of the maturity test and the analysis related to it will be discussed before presenting the findings of the associations between the maturity of companies with the other variables.

#### 5.5.1. Results

This section discusses the data analysis of the social media maturity test which was developed in research activity A and was part of the survey with 61 companies that use social media in research activity B. This section will first present the reliability test for the seven questions of the test before showing the result of the maturity test in details.

##### 5.5.1.1. Reliability test

A reliability analysis was carried out on the social media maturity criteria questions comprising seven items. Table 52 presents the Cronbach's alpha result which shows the questionnaire to reach acceptable reliability,  $\alpha = 0.86$ . The items are worth keeping, resulting in a decrease in



the alpha if deleted. The one exception to this was item seven, which would slightly increase the alpha to  $\alpha = 0.87$ .

**Reliability Statistics**

| Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
|------------------|--|------------|
| .865             | .869   | 7          |

**Table 52 Cronbach's Alpha reliability test for the maturity test with SMEs**

**Item-Total Statistics**

|             | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Squared Multiple Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|-------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| support     | 12.3770                    | 20.672                         | .547                             | .359                         | .858                             |
| budget      | 13.1475                    | 19.728                         | .675                             | .482                         | .840                             |
| strategy    | 13.0164                    | 19.483                         | .771                             | .662                         | .827                             |
| policy      | 13.0328                    | 18.866                         | .644                             | .544                         | .847                             |
| measurement | 13.3770                    | 19.839                         | .725                             | .650                         | .834                             |
| tools       | 13.4426                    | 21.017                         | .698                             | .624                         | .840                             |
| process     | 13.5738                    | 21.982                         | .447                             | .323                         | .870                             |

### 5.5.1.2. Top management support test results

Figure 17 presents the result of the question about top management support. The levels are:

- **Level 1:** Social media marketing in my company has no support from top management/owner; it has only the individual support of the employee who works on it.
- **Level 2:** Social media marketing in my company has the support of mid-management only (example: the marketing manager).
- **Level 3:** Social media marketing in my company has the support of top management (the director/owner).
- **Level 4:** My company is social media oriented. Social media is an essential part of the company's identity.

We can see in figure 35 that 23 companies (the majority) are considered level 3 whereas 22 companies are considered level 4 which is the most advanced level. Only nine companies are considered level 1 and seven companies are considered level 2. Table 53 presents the frequencies.

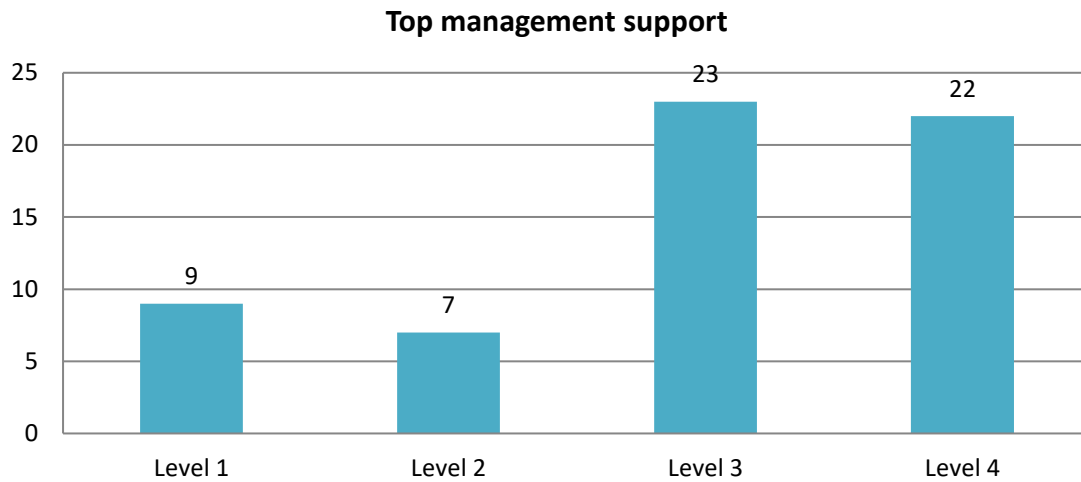


Figure 35 Top management support test result

| Maturity levels | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|-----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| 1.00            | 9         | 14.8    | 14.8          |
| 2.00            | 7         | 11.5    | 11.5          |
| 3.00            | 23        | 37.7    | 37.7          |
| 4.00            | 22        | 36.1    | 36.1          |
| Total           | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |

Table 53 Results of the maturity criterion top management support

### 5.5.1.3. Social media budget maturity test results

Figure 36 and table 54 present the result of the budget question. The levels are:

- **Level 1:** There is no financial budget spent on social media.
- **Level 2:** There is random insignificant budget spent on social media.
- **Level 3:** There is adequate but unstable budget spent on social media.
- **Level 4:** There is dedicated specific and stable budget for social media in my company.

When it comes to the maturity criterion budget, 20 companies, are considered level 1 which is the least mature level whereas 17 companies are considered level 2 and another 17 companies are considered level 3. And finally, only seven companies are considered level 4, the most advanced level.

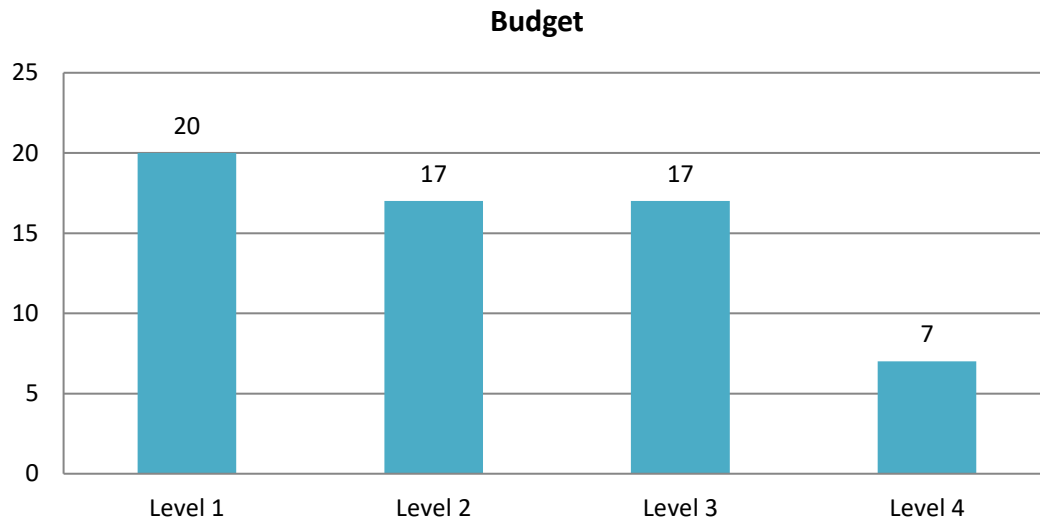


Figure 36 Budget test result

| Maturity levels | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|-----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| 1.00            | 20        | 32.8    | 32.8          |
| 2.00            | 17        | 27.9    | 27.9          |
| 3.00            | 17        | 27.9    | 27.9          |
| 4.00            | 7         | 11.5    | 11.5          |
| Total           | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |

Table 54 Results of the maturity criterion Budget

#### 5.5.1.4. Social media strategy maturity results

When it comes to the maturity criterion strategy, it has four levels:

- **Level 1:** There is no clear or specific objectives/strategy in managing social media in my company.
- **Level 2:** There are some operational objectives & tactics for social media in my company.
- **Level 3:** There is a clear social media strategy with specific objectives in my company.
- **Level 4:** There is a clear social media strategy that is integrated with the overall marketing strategy and the vision of the company.

Figure 37 shows that 24 companies (the majority) achieved level 2 whereas 16 companies are considered level 3. 13 companies are level 1, and 8 companies scored level 4 as shown in table 55.

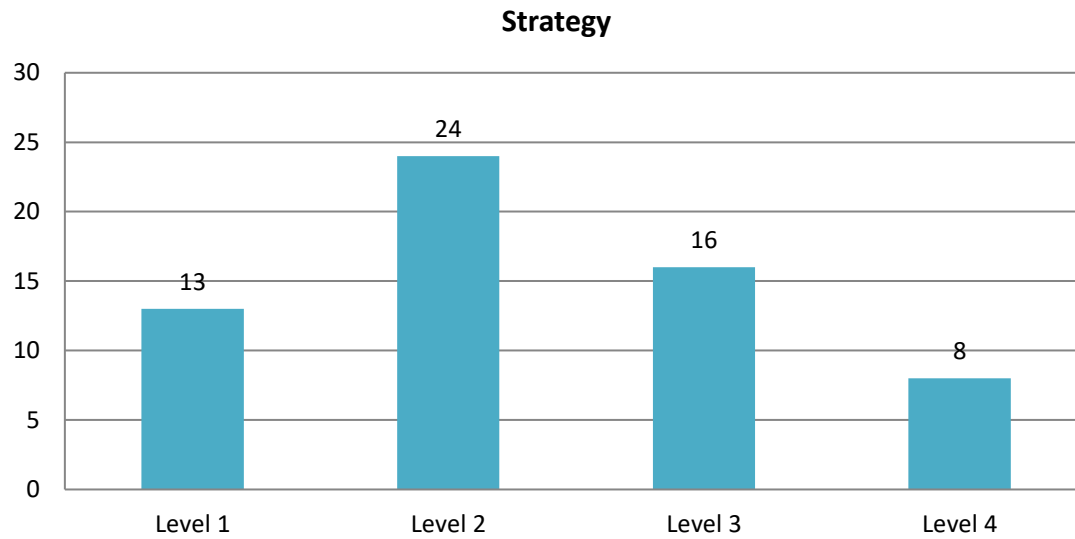


Figure 37 Strategy test result

| Strategy levels | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|-----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| 1.00            | 13        | 21.3    | 21.3          |
| 2.00            | 24        | 39.3    | 39.3          |
| 3.00            | 16        | 26.2    | 26.2          |
| 4.00            | 8         | 13.1    | 13.1          |
| Total           | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |

Table 55 Result of maturity criterion strategy

#### 5.5.1.5. Social media policy maturity test results

As far as social media policy, the levels are:

- **Level 1:** There is no policy for social media use in my company.
- **Level 2:** There is no policy for using social media, but it is clear there is a need for one.
- **Level 3:** There is a generic policy recently created.
- **Level 4:** There is a social media policy that covers internal and external use of social media.

Figure 38 and table 56 show that most companies (24 companies) are considered level 1 in maturity whereas 18 companies are considered level 3. 12 companies achieved level 4 the most mature level and only 7 companies are considered level 2.

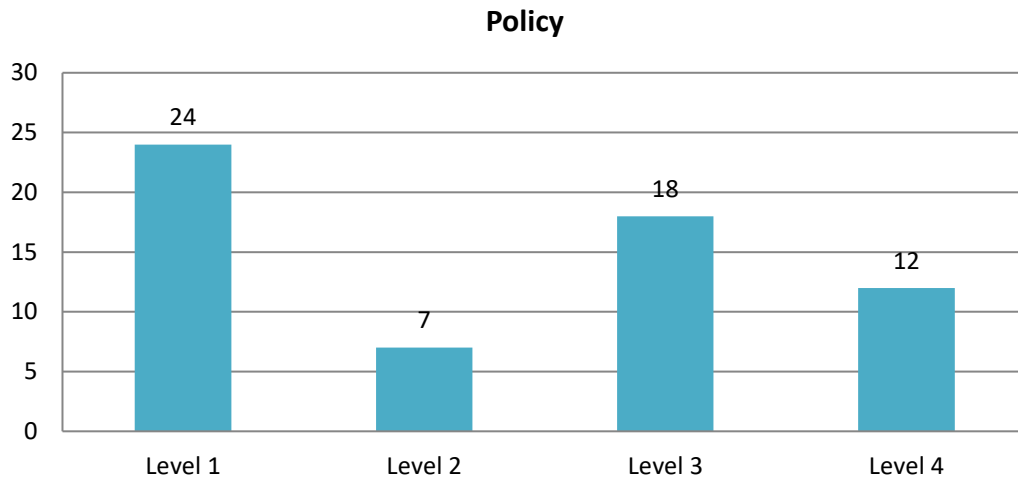


Figure 38 Policy test result

| Maturity levels | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|-----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| 1.00            | 24        | 39.3    | 39.3          |
| 2.00            | 7         | 11.5    | 11.5          |
| 3.00            | 18        | 29.5    | 29.5          |
| 4.00            | 12        | 19.7    | 19.7          |
| Total           | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |

Table 56 Result of maturity criterion Policy

#### 5.5.1.6. Social media measurement maturity test results:

As far as social media measurement, the levels are:

- **Level 1:** We do not measure social media activities on our accounts.
- **Level 2:** We track raw data (number of followers, comments, likes etc.).
- **Level 3:** KPI measurement (associating each social media objective to a set of metrics).
- **Level 4:** We use dashboards (advanced measurement)

Figure 39 shows that the majority of companies (24 companies) achieved level 2 whereas 23 companies are considered level 1. Only 8 companies are considered level 3, and 6 companies achieved level 4 as seen in table 57.

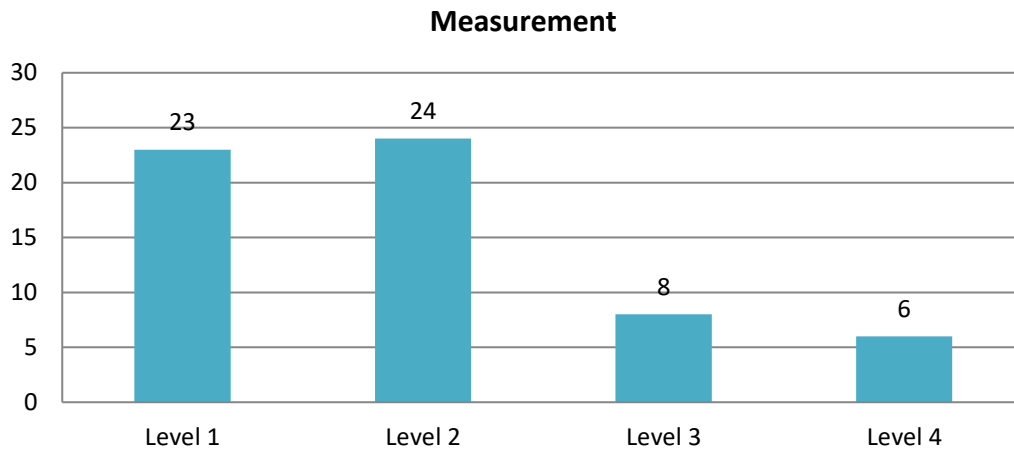


Figure 39 Measurement test result

| Social media measurement |           |         |               |
|--------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| Maturity levels          | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
| 1.00                     | 23        | 37.7    | 37.7          |
| 2.00                     | 24        | 39.3    | 39.3          |
| 3.00                     | 8         | 13.1    | 13.1          |
| 4.00                     | 6         | 9.8     | 9.8           |
| Total                    | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |

Table 57 Measurement criterion test result

#### 5.5.1.7. Social media measurement tools maturity test results:

In regard to the measurement tools used by companies to measure social media activities, the levels are:

- **Level 1:** There are no tools used for measurement.
- **Level 2:** Tracking basic social media alerts available on our social media accounts.
- **Level 3:** Using free social media listening and analysing tools.
- **Level 4:** Using paid sophisticated measurement tools, 360 multi-channel tools for collecting and analysing data, reporting and evaluation

Figure 40 shows that 58 companies which is the majority achieved level 2 whereas 22 companies are considered level 1. 11 companies belong to level 3 and only 2 companies are level 4 as seen in table 46.

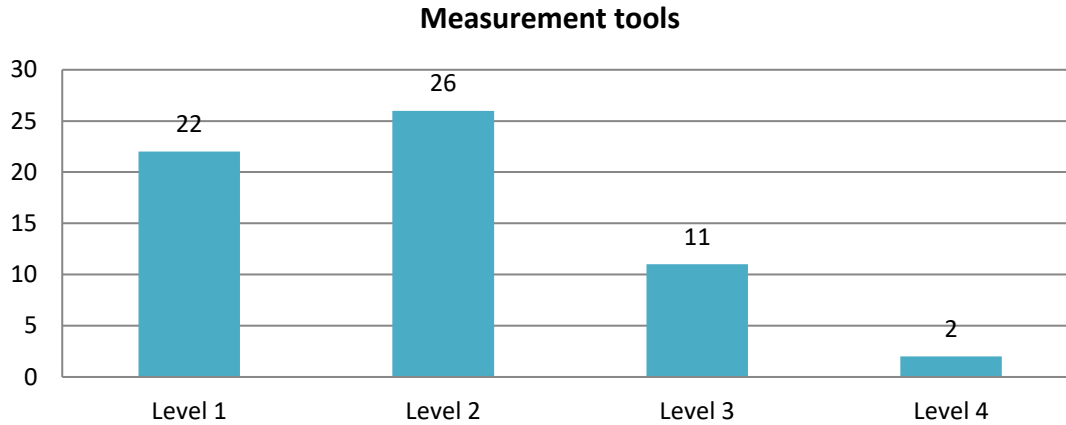


Figure 40 Measurement tools

**Social media measurement tools**

| Maturity levels | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|-----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| 1.00            | 22        | 36.1    | 36.1          |
| 2.00            | 26        | 42.6    | 42.6          |
| 3.00            | 11        | 18.0    | 18.0          |
| 4.00            | 2         | 3.3     | 3.3           |
| Total           | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |

Table 58 Measurement tools criterion test result

#### 5.5.1.8. Social media process maturity test results:

Finally, when it comes to the maturity criterion (Process), the levels are:

- **Level 1:** Only an individual is involved in managing the company's social media presence, no specific process or involvement from any department in the company.
- **Level 2:** Only a group of people is involved in managing social media in the company, there is no involvement from other department in the company.
- **Level 3:** There is cooperation in social media processes and management between some divisions in the company.
- **Level 4:** Social media is integrated within the overall company's process. All departments are involved.

Figure 41 shows that more than half companies are considered level 1 whereas 14 companies are level 2. 10 companies are level 3 and only 4 companies are considered level 4 as shown in table 59.

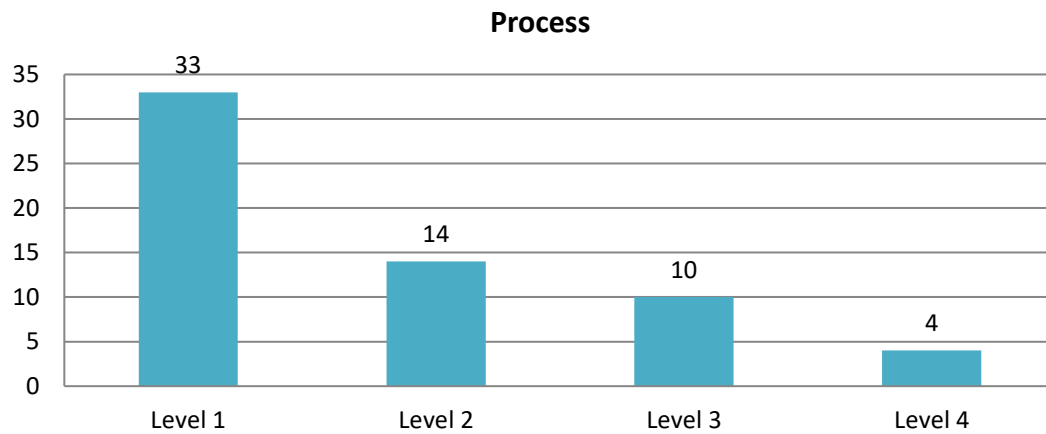


Figure 41 Process test result

| Maturity levels | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|-----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| 1.00            | 33        | 54.1    | 54.1          |
| 2.00            | 14        | 23.0    | 23.0          |
| 3.00            | 10        | 16.4    | 16.4          |
| 4.00            | 4         | 6.6     | 6.6           |

Table 59 Result of maturity criterion Process

#### 5.5.1.9. Summary of the 4 maturity levels achieved in the maturity test

Figure 42 summarises the levels obtained by companies in each maturity criterion. We can see that the majority of SMEs achieved level 3 in top management support: "Social media in my company has the support of top management". When it comes to the social media budget in

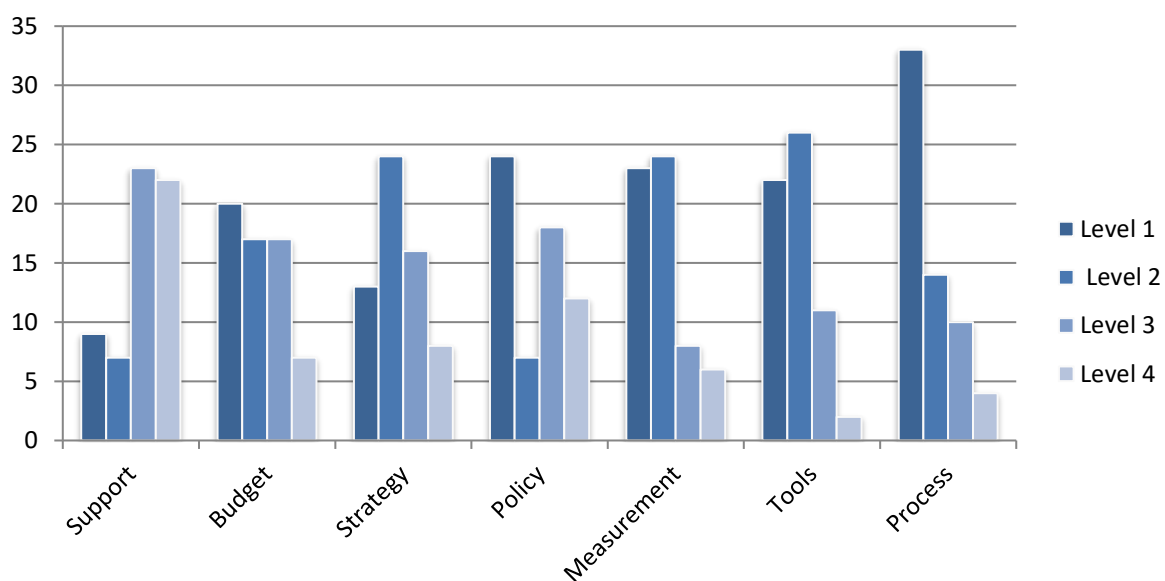


Figure 42 Summary of 4 maturity levels for each criterion achieved by companies



these companies, the average is level 2 which states: "There is random insignificant budget spent on social media".

When it comes to social media strategy in these companies, we can see that the average maturity level is 2: "There are some operational tactics in my company". As far as social media policy in these companies, the average is level 2 which states: "There is no policy for social media in my company, but there is a need to create one". When it comes to social media measurement in these companies, we can see that the average maturity level is 2: "We track raw data (number of followers, likes, etc.". In regard to social media measurement tools used in these companies, the average maturity level is 2: "We track social media alerts available on our social media accounts". And finally, when it comes to the process of managing social media in these companies, we can see that the average maturity level for this criterion is level 1: "Only an individual is involved in the social media management, no specific process or involvement from other departments in the companies".

We can see in the graph that the SMEs are most mature in the criterion top management support as the majority scored level 3 and 4. On the other hand, it is clear that the companies are least mature in the criterion process as the majority achieved level 1. Then come measurement and measurement tools second in the least advanced criteria. The rest of the criteria are considered in between.

#### 5.5.1.10. The average levels achieved in all 7 maturity criteria (median, mode)

In regard to the average maturity level of the companies in each maturity criterion, the results were analysed with SPSS to calculate the average score based on the median since the data is ordinal. Table 60 presents the statistical analysis for average maturity level achieved by companies for each criterion. This will help identify which areas are Saudi SMEs considered mature and which areas are non-advanced. The table shows that the highest level the companies

achieved on an average is for top management support. On the other hand, they are least mature in regard to "process". This result is consistent with the findings of the obstacles to success question which was discussed in part 1 of this chapter and which showed that the most significant barrier to success in social media by these SMEs is the lack of a dedicated team to work on social media. The companies are considered level 2 on average in the rest of the criteria.

#### Statistics

|               |         | Maturity_<br>support | Maturity_<br>budget | Maturity_<br>strategy | Maturity_<br>policy | Maturity-<br>measurement | Maturity_<br>tools | Maturity_<br>process |
|---------------|---------|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| N             | Valid   | 61                   | 61                  | 61                    | 61                  | 61                       | 61                 | 61                   |
|               | Missing | 0                    | 0                   | 0                     | 0                   | 0                        | 0                  | 0                    |
| Mean          |         | 2.9508               | 2.1803              | 2.3115                | 2.2951              | 1.9508                   | 1.8852             | 1.7541               |
| <b>Median</b> |         | <b>3.0000</b>        | <b>2.0000</b>       | <b>2.0000</b>         | <b>2.0000</b>       | <b>2.0000</b>            | <b>2.0000</b>      | <b>1.0000</b>        |
| Mode          |         | 3.00                 | 1.00                | 2.00                  | 1.00                | 2.00                     | 2.00               | 1.00                 |

**Table 60** Average maturity scores achieved by companies for 7 maturity criteria

Based on the results in table 60, a radar chart was created and presented in figure 43 to illustrate both the median and mode scores for each maturity criterion that the SMEs achieved. The reason why we combined those two measures in one graph is to get a better insight into the overall result by presenting the average (median) and the majority (mode). By showing the median and mode, we can say that the most advanced score of maturity levels the companies achieved is for criteria "top management support" with companies scoring level 3 in both the mode and median. The least advanced level of maturity among the seven criteria is "social media process" with companies achieving level 1 in both the mode and the median. Also, the companies scored level 2 on average based on both the mode and median for the criteria "measurement" and "measurement tools". We can see that budget and policy are between level 1 and 2 in maturity on an average with the mode showing level 1 and median showing level 2.

### The average score companies achieved in the maturity test

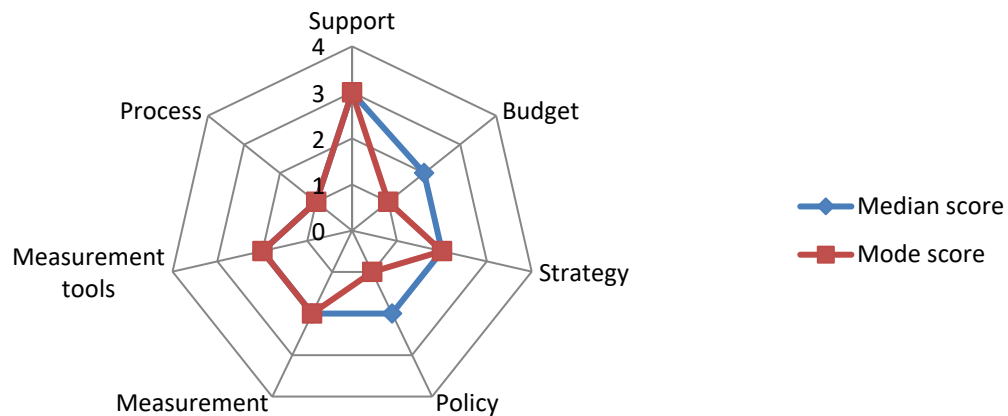


Figure 43 Overall performance of companies based on the average for each maturity criterion

#### 5.5.1.11. The calculated maturity score companies achieved

Figure 44 presents the overall maturity stages that the 61 SMEs achieved after taking the maturity test based on the calculation formula proposed in research activity A. About 52% of companies are considered level 2, whereas 25% of them are level 3 in social media maturity, 18% achieved level 1 while only 5% of companies reached the advanced maturity level 4.

#### Final maturity stages of companies

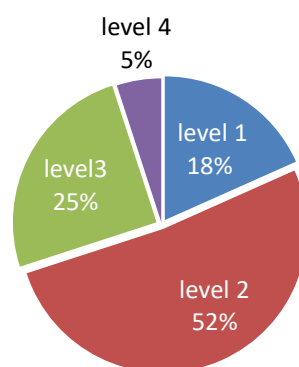


Figure 44 Final maturity stages companies achieved

Table 61 presents the mean, median and mode for the average calculated maturity level of the 61 companies which participated in this study. All three measures show stage 2 as the average

level of maturity for all companies which indicate that these SMEs are not mature in their use of social media. Table 62 shows the frequency of the maturity stages companies achieved.

#### Average maturity stage

|        |         |        |
|--------|---------|--------|
| N      | Valid   | 61     |
|        | Missing | 0      |
| Mean   |         | 2.1639 |
| Median |         | 2.0000 |
| Mode   |         | 2.00   |

Table 61 Mean, median and mode for average maturity levels of companies

#### Average maturity stages frequency

|       |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|-------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| Valid | 1.00  | 11        | 18.0    | 18.0          |
|       | 2.00  | 32        | 52.5    | 52.5          |
|       | 3.00  | 15        | 24.6    | 24.6          |
|       | 4.00  | 3         | 4.9     | 4.9           |
|       | Total | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |

Table 62 Average maturity stages companies achieved

After calculating the maturity stages of companies, it was time to examine what factors are associated with the maturity of SMEs by running a Chi-square test of association using SPSS and the results will be discussed in the next section.

### 5.5.2. Chi-square test of association results

After presenting the maturity test results based on the calculation proposed in research activity A, further investigation was carried out on the maturity test results and other variables in the survey. A Chi-Square test of association was conducted to determine if there are associations between the maturity criteria and other categorical variables in the survey. According to (Libguides.library.kent.edu, 2018) Chi-Square test of independence is usually used to examine "the statistical independence or association between two or more categorical variables and cannot provide any inferences about causation".

#### 5.5.2.1. The variables

The objective is to test if there is an association between each social media maturity criterion as well as the social media final maturity stages of companies with the following variables:

- Ten demographic variables. (City, position, gender, age, degree, number of employees, commercial activity, year established, and do they have website).
- Hours dedicated for social media per week, years using social media.

- Social media adoption factors using 3 points Likert scale type (not positive, agree, strongly agree) to 21 statements related to social media adoption factor: perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, top management support, corporate goals, social media skills and knowledge, financial Resources, Sector, external competitive pressure, consumer social media readiness, infrastructure.
- Used social media accounts and effective ones.
- Obstacles to success in using social media.

#### 5.5.2.2. Statistically significant Chi-square test of association between 7 maturity criteria and different variables within a company

| Variables   | Social media maturity criteria associated with the variable | Chi-square test <i>p</i> | Chi-square test value |
|---|---|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Perceived usefulness 3                                    | Top management support                                      | .004                     | 19.134                |
|   | Social media strategy                                       | .005                     | 18.695                |
|   | Social media policy (use1)                                  | .001                     | 22.714                |
|   | Social media process  | .045                     | 12.866                |
| The consistency of social media with the business goals 1 | Top management support                                      | .000                     | 34.777                |
|   | Social media strategy                                       | .035                     | 13.510                |
|   | Social media policy   | .020                     | 14.992                |
| Owner having good knowledge of social media               | Top management support                                      | .037                     | 13.432                |
| Availability of financial resources                       | Social media budget   | .025                     | 14.465                |
|   | Social media strategy                                       | .007                     | 17.761                |
| Lack of resources as an obstacle                          | Social media budget   | .002                     | 14.926                |
| Social media infrastructure                               | Social media budget   | .027                     | 14.294                |
|   | Social media strategy                                       | .017                     | 10.229                |
|   | Social media policy   | .004                     | 18.933                |
|   | Social media measurement tools                              | .013                     | 16.145                |
| Having a LinkedIn account                                 | Social media strategy                                       | .049                     | 7.866                 |
|   | Social media measurement tools                              | .017                     | 10.223                |
| Top management support 1                                  | Social media strategy                                       | .036                     | 13.510                |
|   | Social media policy   | .049                     | 12.635                |
| Providing social media training in the company            | Social media strategy                                       | .011                     | 16.547                |
|   | Social media measurement                                    | .003                     | 20.169                |
|   | Social media process  | .025                     | 14.481                |
| Lack of social media infrastructure                       | Social media strategy                                       | .017                     | 10.229                |
| Hours spent on social media per week                      | Social media measurement                                    | .021                     | 19.557                |
|   | Social media measurement tools                              | .000                     | 31.189                |

|   |                                |      |        |
|---|--------------------------------|------|--------|
| Having excellent social media skills and knowledge in the company | Social media measurement       | .046 | 12.813 |
|   | Social media measurement tools | .000 | 31.189 |
|   | Social media strategy          | .019 | 15.102 |
| Size of the company   | Social media measurement       | .011 | 21.375 |
|   | Social media measurement tools | .010 | 58.750 |
| Age of owner/ respondent  | Social media measurement       | .003 | 30.078 |
|   | Social media measurement tools | .007 | 27.500 |
| Having a YouTube account  | Social media measurement tools | .006 | 12.352 |
| Activity of the business/ sector                                  | Social media measurement tools | .010 | 58.750 |

**Table 63 Significant Chi-square test results between maturity criteria and different variables**

Table 63 presents the significant positive associations between the social media maturity criteria and other variables within the companies. Since the p-value is less than the significance level  $\alpha = 0.05$ , we can conclude that there is a significant association between the maturity criteria and the variables in table 60. The table shows that perceived usefulness of social media and the availability of infrastructure in the company are both associated with 4 out of the 7 maturity criteria. Perceived usefulness is associated with top management support, social media strategy, social media policy and social media process. While the availability of infrastructure in the company is associated with the following maturity criteria: social media budget, social media strategy, social media policy, social media measurement tools. Those two factors also are associated with the final maturity score of companies which will be discussed in the next section. Also, the consistency of social media with the overall business goals of the SMEs and providing social media training in the company as well as the availability of social media skills and knowledge in the company are three factors that are associated with 3 out of the 7 maturity criteria. The consistency of social media with the overall business goals is significantly associated with the following maturity criteria: top management support, social media strategy and social media policy. Whereas providing social media training in the company (skills 3) is associated with the following maturity criteria: social media strategy, social media

measurement, and social media process. Similarly, the availability of social media skills and knowledge in the company is associated with the maturity criteria: social media measurement, social media measurement tools, and social media strategy. Financial resources, LinkedIn account, hours spent on social media, size of company and age are factors that are associated with 2 out of the 7 maturity criteria. And finally, the activity of the company, YouTube and owner's knowledge in social media (skills 4) are factors that are associated with 1 out of 7 maturity criteria. Figure 45 present a summary of each maturity criterion and the variables associated with it.

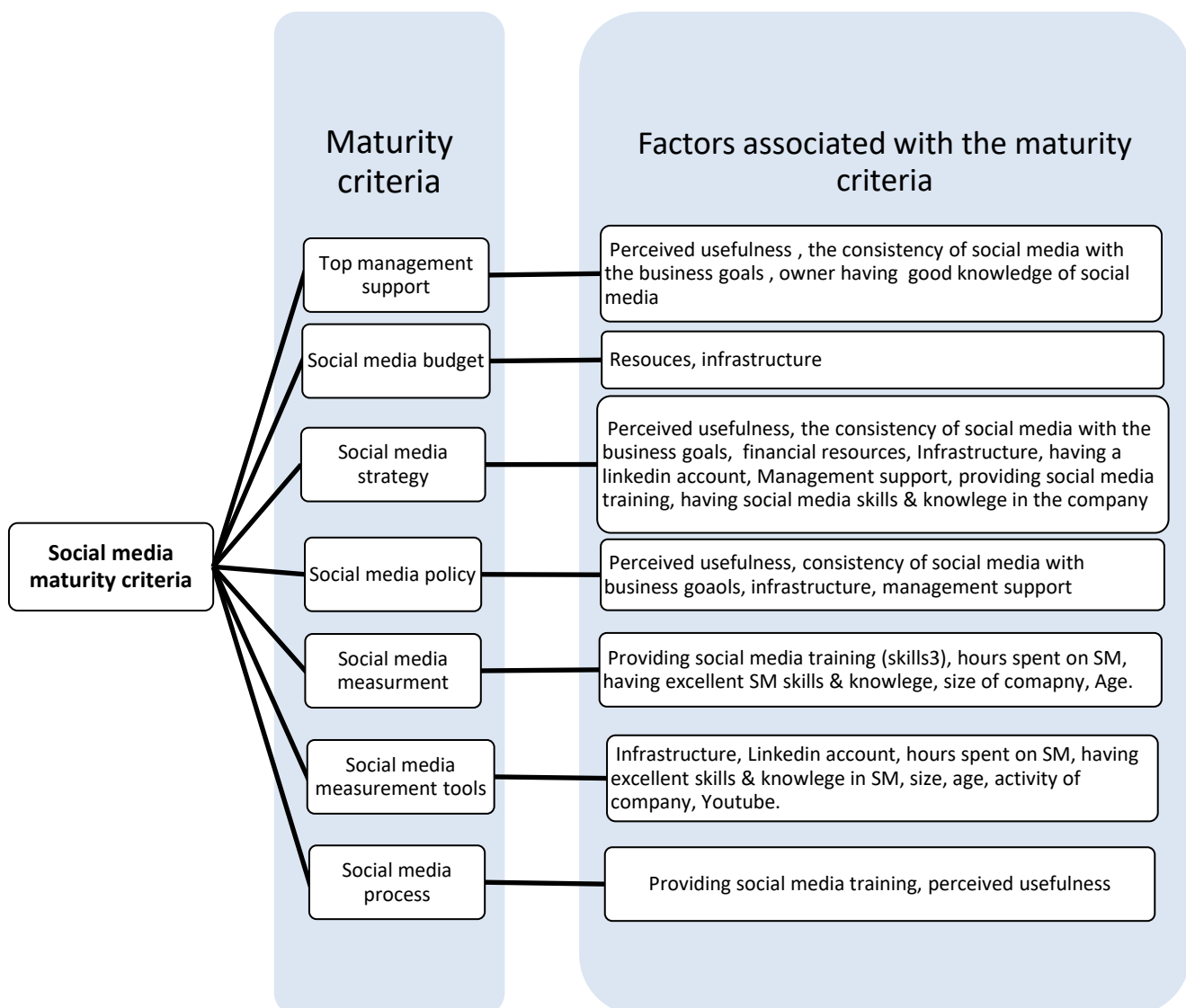


Figure 45 Summary of association between each maturity criterion and other variables based on the chi-square results

### 5.5.2.3. Statistically significant Chi-square test of association between calculated final maturity stages of companies and other variables

| Variable 1                                      | Variable 2                                  | Chi-square test $p$ | Chi-square test value |
|---|---|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Final social media maturity stages of companies | Hours spent on social media                 | .001                | 28.360                |
|   | Having a LinkedIn account                   | .002                | 14.582                |
|   | Perceived usefulness of social media 1      | .007                | 17.603                |
|   | Perceived usefulness 2                      | .012                | 16.349                |
|   | Top management support 2                    | .002                | 21.129                |
|   | Business goals 1                            | .040                | 13.183                |
|   | Providing training in the company (skills3) | .012                | 16.382                |
|   | Financial Resources                         | .038                | 13.335                |
|   | SM infrastructure                           | .001                | 22.578                |

**Table 64 Significant Chi-square test results between the final maturity stage of companies and different variable**

Table 64 presents the significant associations between the final calculated maturity score of companies with other variables. The associated variables with the final maturity stages of companies include: Perceived usefulness of social media, the availability of social media infrastructure in the company, the availability of financial resources in the company, providing social media training to the employee working on social media, the amount of hours dedicated for social media per week and finally having a LinkedIn account in the company. A summary of these results is presented in figure 46 where the variables associated with the final social media maturity of companies are presented with the other variables that are also associated with the ones in table 64. This will give extra insight into these new associations.

The results show that the perceived usefulness of social media and the availability of infrastructure are associated with four maturity criteria as well as with the final maturity stages of companies. Also, the consistency of social media with the overall business goals of companies, the availability of financial infrastructure and providing social media training to employees are also variables that are associated with 2 or more of the maturity criteria and even



with the final maturity stages of companies. In addition to hours dedicated to social media and top management support which also affect the overall maturity of SMEs.

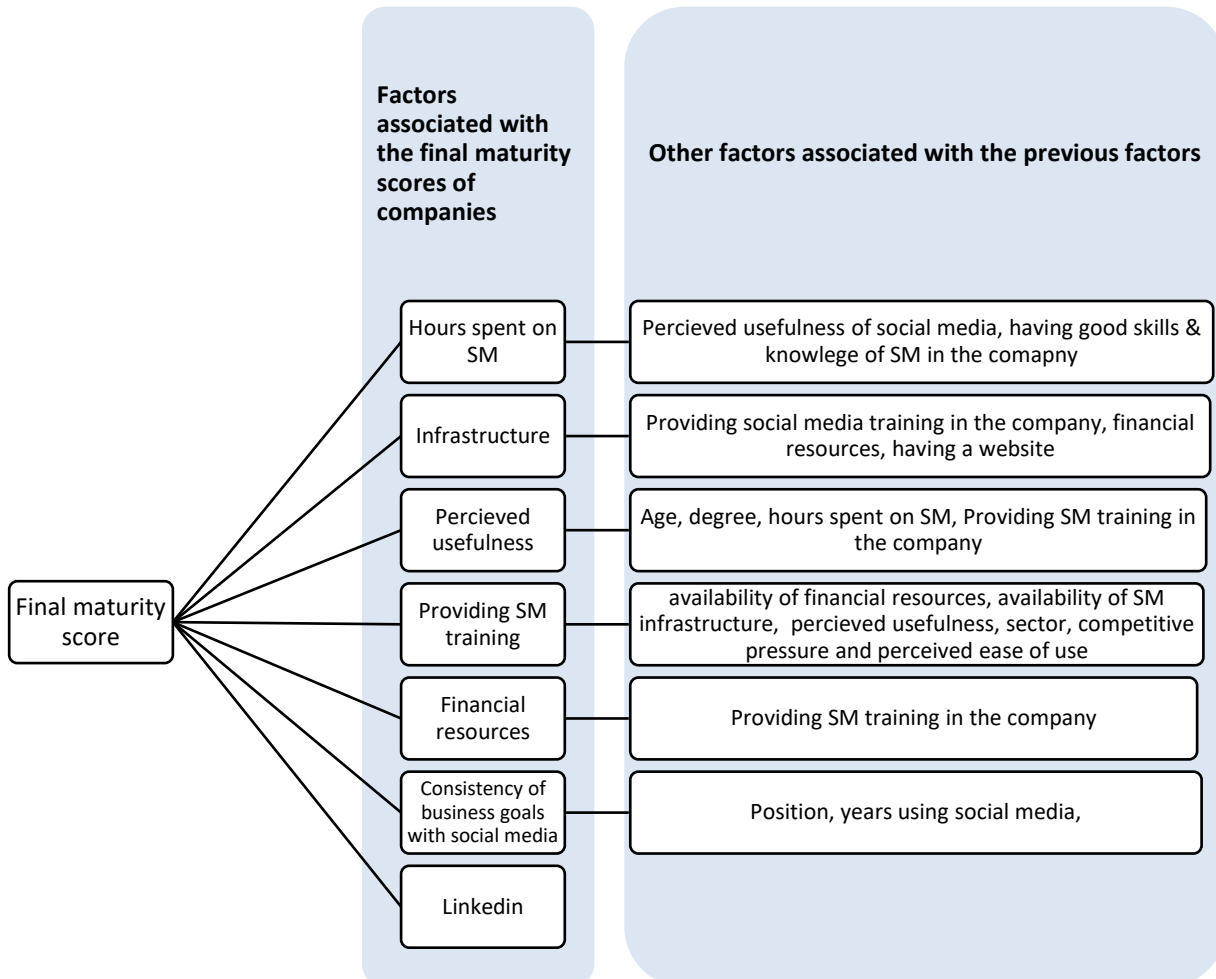


Figure 46 Summary of associations between the final maturity stages of companies with other variables

#### 5.5.2.4. Stacked bar charts illustrating the chi-square test association between the final maturity stage and demographical and adoption variables

The results of the significant associations between the final maturity stages of companies and other variables which were presented in table 63 and figure 64 are illustrated in the series of figures below. The illustration was important for understanding the shape of the associations.

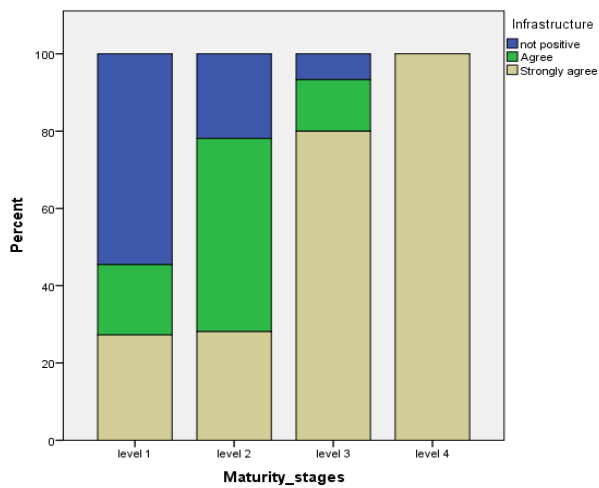


Figure 51 Association between infrastructure and maturity stages

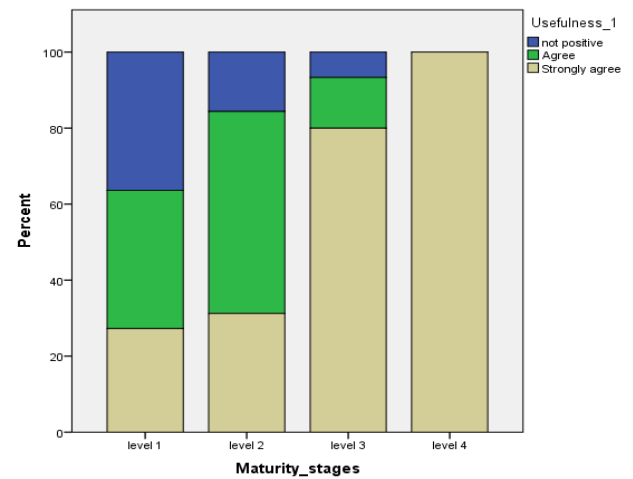


Figure 52 Association between perceived usefulness and maturity stages

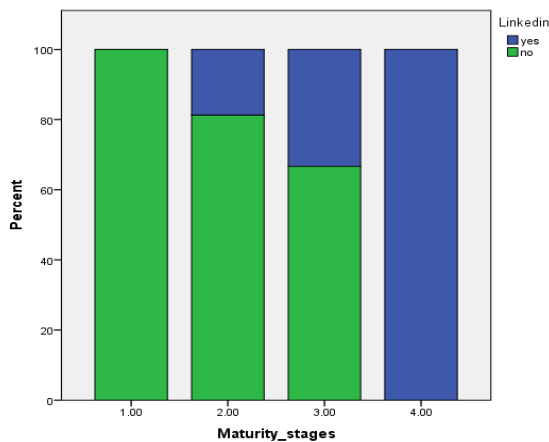


Figure 50 Association between having a LinkedIn and the maturity stages

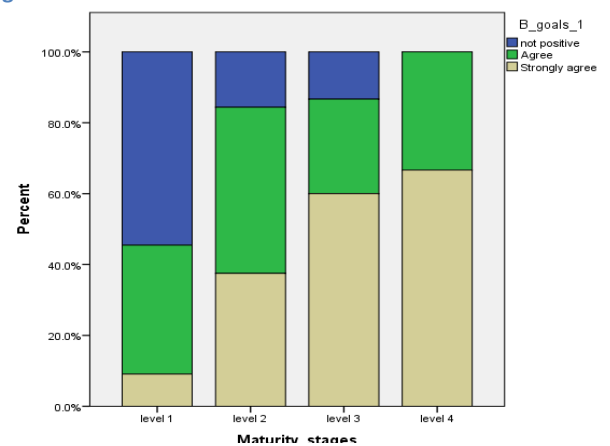


Figure 49 Association between business goals and maturity stages

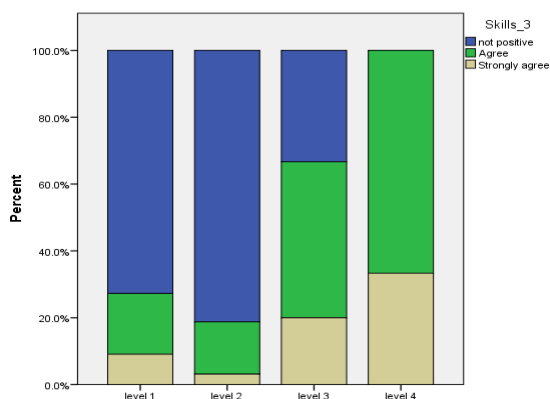


Figure 47 Association between providing training and maturity stages

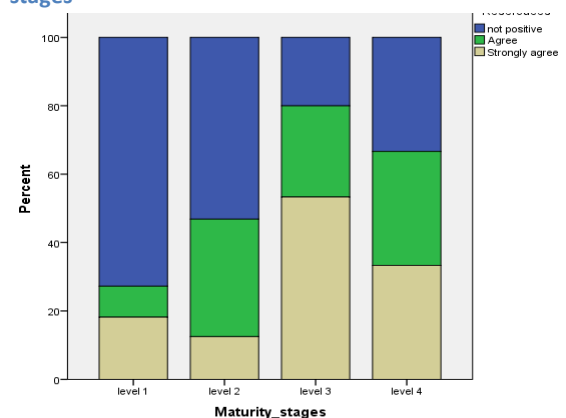


Figure 48 Associations between resources and maturity stages

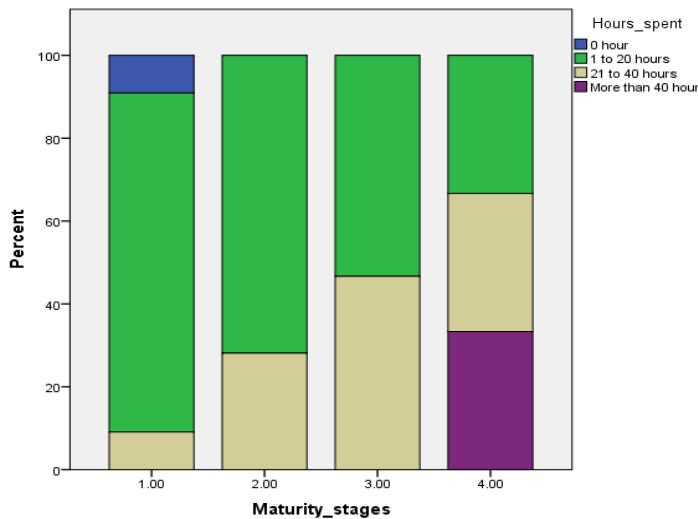


Figure 53 Association between hours spent on SM and maturity stages

## 5.6. Chapter summary

This chapter discussed the data collection process and results of research activity B survey which aimed at investigating social media adoption, benefits, obstacles and maturity of social media in SMEs located in Saudi Arabia. It also intended to explore the associations between adoption, maturity, obstacles and demographical variables within SMEs. Mainly to answer the following research questions:

- **RQ1b:** How can the maturity of using social media be calculated based on the criteria identified in this study?
- **RQ2a:** Which factors affect SMEs adoption of social media in Saudi Arabia?
- **RQ2b:** What are the objectives of using social media by SMEs in Saudi Arabia?
- **RQ2c:** What are the benefits Saudi SMEs gained from using SM?
- **RQ2d:** What are the obstacles to using SM successfully in Saudi SMEs?
- **RQ2e:** What are the barriers to social media adoption in SMEs in Saudi Arabia?
- **RQ2f:** How mature are the SMEs in Saudi Arabia and what factors are associated with the maturity?

The survey received a total of 71 responses from SMEs located in Saudi Arabia. The discussion of the data was sectioned into three parts:

- **Part 1:** presented the results of SMEs using social media. A total of 61 Saudi SMEs stated that they use social media in their businesses. Overall, the findings show that Twitter and Instagram are the most popular and used social media networks by these SMEs, then comes Facebook in the third place followed by Snapchat. The least used account is Pinterest, then LinkedIn. In regard to the most effective social media networks for these companies, 61.8% stated that Instagram is the most useful social media network for their business followed by Twitter with 60%. The aligned objectives of why these SMEs use social media matches the following themes identified from the literature:
  - Perceived usefulness of social media
  - Creation of brand awareness
  - Reach of target market
  - Consumer engagement
  - leads generation
  - Generation of advanced market insights
  - Perceived ease of use
  - facilitate customer support
  - Follow social media market trends
  - Increase website awareness

When it comes to the adoption statements, A total of 61 companies answered 21 statements related to 10 adoption factors using 5 points Likert scale type. The aim was to investigate if the ten adoption factors identified in the literature affect the Saudi Arabian SMEs. The statistical analysis on the ten adoption factors revealed that the median for all the adoption statements is either 2 (agree) or 3 (strongly agree) except for skills3 which is about if the company provides social media training to its employees, the median for that item was 1 (Not positive).

The three most reported benefits gained from using social media by the majority of the Saudi companies (40 SMEs) include: Increased exposure to the company, improved sales and increased number of loyal customers, respectively. Moreover, the results showed that the three most reported obstacles that inhibit companies from using social media successfully are: not having a dedicated team to work on social media, lack of time and skills. The obstacles reported also include: companies' perception that Saudi consumers are not ready to interact with companies on social media, not measuring their social media performance and not having an infrastructure for social media in their companies.

- **Part 2:** presented the findings related to SMEs that do not use social media: 10 companies out of 71 SMEs said they do not have social media accounts.

As part of answering the research question: **RQ2e** What are the barriers to social media adoption in SMEs in Saudi Arabia? These companies were asked questions related to 3 areas: 1) Why they do not use social media in their business, 2) are they planning to use social media in the future and 3) if yes, why are they planning to use social media.

The ten companies non-users of social media were asked to explain the reasons for not using social media in an open-ended question. Their responses fall into three categories of factors that were already identified from the literature, these factors are:

- Perceived usefulness of social media
- Lack of knowledge, skills, and expertise in social media
- The type of business activity and sector

The respondents then were further asked the same question, but in a different format using multiple responses for respondents to choose from, the question was: which of the following factors is a reason for your company not to adopt social media? The answers made for this question confirms 3 of the social media obstacles which are: perceived usefulness, lack of

knowledge and expertise and lack of time. And also prove the adoption factors: infrastructure, the perceived usefulness of social media and the perceived consumers' readiness.

3 out of the 10 companies stated they plan to use social media in the future whereas 5 companies said they don't know if they will use social media in the future and only 1 SMEs stated that it is not planning to use social media in the future. The four companies that said they plan to use social media were asked why they are planning to in an open-ended question. The responses fall under 3 themes: the perceived usefulness of social media, Perceived ease of use and external competition and sector and one was related to supporting the customers.

- **Part 3:** presented the results of the social media maturity test and the associations of other variables with the overall maturity of companies.

This question aims at investigating the maturity of Saudi Arabian SMEs in the way they use social media. We used the social media maturity model that was proposed in research activity A to assess the maturity of the SMEs and to examine the associations between the maturity stages of companies with other variables which will help in discovering more possible factors that could play a role in social media maturity. From the results, the Saudi SMEs that participated in this study are least mature when it comes to the process criterion with a median and mode showing level 1 on an average. This result is consistent with the question about the obstacles of which the majority of companies reported not having a dedicated team to work on social media as an obstacle to success. Regarding the budget and policy criteria, they achieved the second lowest scores, level 2 in median and level 1 in mode. On the other hand, the SMEs are somehow mature in the criterion top management support which has a median and mode both show level 3. In the rest of the criteria (strategy, measurement and measurement tools) the companies achieved level 2 in both median and mode on an average.

After calculating the final maturity scores for these SMEs, (52%) are considered level 2 in social media maturity which is considered not mature. 15 companies (25%) achieved level 3 which is somehow mature, whereas 11 companies (18%) achieved level 1 in social media maturity which is the least mature form of using social media. And finally, only three companies (5%) achieved level 4 which is the most mature stage of using social media according to our proposed maturity model.

As part of investigating how other factors are associated with each maturity criterion and with the final maturity stages of companies, a Chi-square test of association was performed to answer this research question. The results presented in table 63 demonstrate the statistically significant associations between different variables and each maturity criterion. This result is one of the primary contributions of this research. It is important to note that these associations do not imply or mean causation. table 64 which presents the Chi-square test association results between the calculated overall social media maturity stages of companies and other variables, and which present one of the main contributions of the current research. We can see that the overall social media maturity stage of the company is significantly associated with the following variables: Number of hours dedicated to social media per week, Having a LinkedIn account, Perceived usefulness of social media by the owner , Top management support to social media in the company, The consistency of social media with the business goals and vision of the company, Providing social media training in the company , The availability of financial resources in the company , The availability of social media infrastructure in the company

The next chapter will discuss the data collection process and data analysis and results of research activity C survey which investigates the consumers' social media readiness for corporate social media accounts in Saudi Arabia.

## Chapter 6 - Research activity C – Data collection and results

### 6. Introduction

This chapter discusses the data collection process and data analysis and findings for research activity C survey which is presented in appendix 5 and 6. The study aims to investigate the consumers' social media readiness for corporate social media accounts in Saudi Arabia; this involves examining the social media networks used by Saudi social media users and how frequently they access social media. It also explores the type of actions consumers make on corporate social media accounts. Moreover, this study intends to measure the Saudi consumers' perceived usefulness and ease of use of corporate social media accounts as well as the consumers' attitude and their perceived trust and privacy towards interacting with companies on social media. Research activity C aims to answer the following research question:

**RQ3:** How ready are the Saudi consumers for engaging with corporate social media accounts?

This chapter starts by discussing the data collection process followed by the data analysis and findings of the survey.



## 6.1. Data collection

Invitations were sent to social media users in Saudi Arabia through email, LinkedIn, Twitter and WhatsApp. Respondents were encouraged to share the survey with their family and friends. The data collection took place during June 2016 and January 2017. A total of 363 valid survey responses were received with a 90% response rate.

## 6.2. Survey results

This section will present the data analysis of research activity C survey which aims at investigating consumers' social media readiness for corporate social media accounts targeting users in Saudi Arabia. This section starts by presenting the demographics of the respondents.

### 6.2.1. Demographics

Table 53 below shows a summary of the demographic data of the survey. The data revealed that there is a total of 238 females (66%) and 125 males (34%). 51% of the respondents belong to the age group 25 to 34 followed by age group 18 to 24 which constitutes 28% of the overall respondents. 56% of respondents are from Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia whereas 44% are from different cities in Saudi Arabia and abroad. More than 50 percent of responses came from people with Bachelor degree as the highest degree they obtained whereas 23% are Master's degree holders, 13% with high school or less and only 3% are Ph.D. holders. When it comes to the monthly income, 34% of the respondents get between 8000 to 15000 SAR per month, whereas 27% get less than 4000 SR monthly.

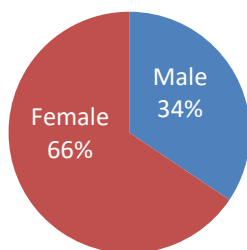
| Demographics   | Total | Percentage |
|----------------|-------|------------|
| <b>Gender:</b> |       |            |
| Male           | 125   | 34%        |
| Female         | 238   | 66%        |
| <b>Age:</b>    |       |            |
| Less than 18   | 11    | 3%         |
| 18-24          | 102   | 28%        |
| 25-34          | 186   | 51%        |

|                        |     |     |
|------------------------|-----|-----|
| 35-54                  | 63  | 17% |
| 55-64                  | 1   | 1%  |
| More than 65           | 0   |     |
| <b>Education:</b>      |     |     |
| High school or less    | 50  | 13% |
| Certificate            | 5   | 1%  |
| Diploma                | 10  | 3%  |
| Bachelor               | 198 | 55% |
| Masters                | 84  | 23% |
| PhD                    | 12  | 4%  |
| Other                  | 4   | 1%  |
| <b>Monthly income:</b> |     |     |
| Less than 4000 SAR     | 99  | 27% |
| Between 4000 and 8000  | 55  | 15% |
| Between 8001 to 15000  | 127 | 35% |
| Between 15001 to 25000 | 62  | 17% |
| More than 25000        | 20  | 6%  |
| <b>City:</b>           |     |     |
| Riyadh                 | 203 | 56% |
| Khobar                 | 15  | 4%  |
| Dammam                 | 20  | 6%  |
| Jeddah                 | 42  | 12% |
| Other                  | 81  | 22% |

Table 65 Summary of the demographics of respondents in the consumers SM readiness

- **Gender:**

A total of 363 valid responses were received from social media users in Saudi Arabia, 66% of the respondents are female while 34% are males.



| Gender | Total | Percentage |
|--------|-------|------------|
| Male   | 125   | 34%        |
| Female | 238   | 66%        |
| Total  | 363   | 100%       |

Figure 54 Gender of respondents

- **Age:**

When it comes to the age of the respondents, 51% belong to the age group 25 to 34 years old, 28% are 18 to 24 years old. 17% belong to the age group 35 to 54, while 3% are less than 18 years old and only 1 respondent aged from 55 to 64.

| Age          | Total      | Percentage  |
|--------------|------------|-------------|
| Less than 18 | 11         | 3%          |
| 18-24        | 102        | 28%         |
| 25-34        | 186        | 51%         |
| 35-54        | 63         | 17%         |
| 55-64        | 1          | 1%          |
| More than 65 | 0          | 0           |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>363</b> | <b>100%</b> |

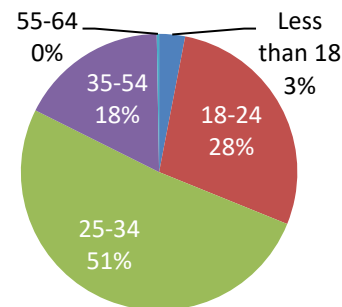


Figure 55 Age of respondents

- **Education**

In regard to the educational background of the respondents, a majority of 55% are Bachelor degree holders whereas 23% have Master degrees. 13% have high school or less while 4% are Ph.D. degree holders.

| Education           | Total      | Percentage  |
|---------------------|------------|-------------|
| High school or less | 50         | 13%         |
| Certificate         | 5          | 1%          |
| Diploma             | 10         | 3%          |
| Bachelor            | 198        | 55%         |
| Masters             | 84         | 23%         |
| PhD                 | 12         | 4%          |
| other               | 4          | 1%          |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>363</b> | <b>100%</b> |

### Education

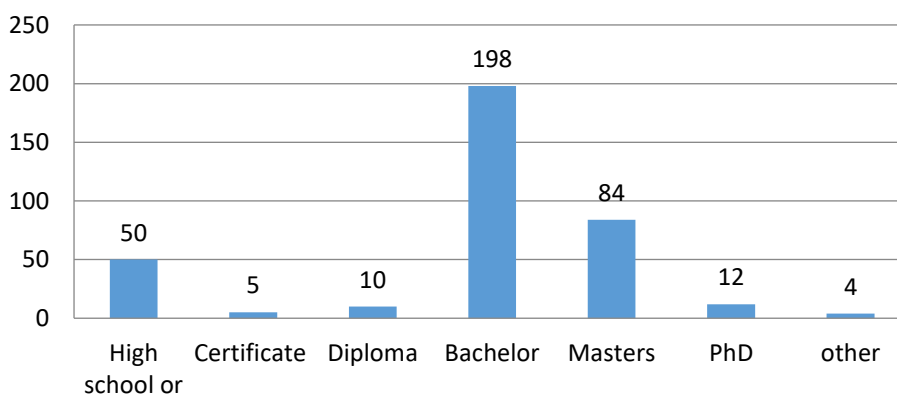


Figure 56 Education of respondents

- **Monthly income**

When it comes to the monthly income of the respondents, 35% of them have a monthly income from 8001 to 15000 SAR, while 27% have less than 4000 SAR salary; also, 17% have a salary between 15001 to 25000 SAR a month and 15% from 4000 to 8000 SAR. Finally, 6% have a monthly salary that is more than 25000 SAR a month.

| Monthly income         | Total | Percentage |
|------------------------|-------|------------|
| Less than 4000 SAR     | 99    | 27%        |
| Between 4000 and 8000  | 55    | 15%        |
| Between 8001 to 15000  | 127   | 35%        |
| Between 15001 to 25000 | 62    | 17%        |
| More than 25000        | 20    | 6%         |

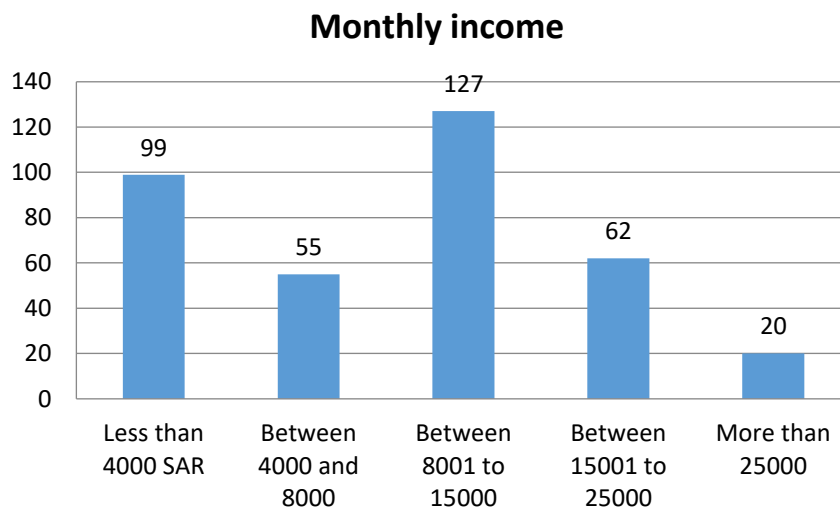


Figure 57 Monthly income

- **City:**

56% of respondents live in Riyadh the capital of Saudi Arabia whereas 12% live in Jeddah. 6% from Dammam and 4% from Khobar. 22% from other cities in Saudi Arabia as seen in table 54, 17 respondents are from Qassim and 12 respondents are from Taif whereas 8 respondents are from Alhassa. Table 66 presents the other cities the respondents currently live in.

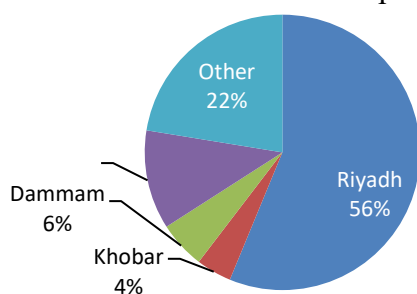


Figure 58 City of respondents

| Demographics | Total | Percentage |
|--------------|-------|------------|
| Riyadh       | 203   | 56%        |
| Khobar       | 15    | 4%         |
| Dammam       | 20    | 6%         |
| Jeddah       | 42    | 12%        |
| Other        | 81    | 22%        |

| Other Cities   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|
|                | 280       | 77.1    | 77.1          |
| Souda          | 1         | .3      | .3            |
| Abha           | 5         | 1.4     | 1.4           |
| Abroad         | 3         | .8      | .8            |
| Alassa         | 1         | .3      | .3            |
| Alhassa        | 8         | 2.2     | 2.2           |
| Assir          | 2         | .6      | .6            |
| Bisha          | 3         | .8      | .8            |
| China          | 1         | .3      | .3            |
| DC             | 1         | .3      | .3            |
| Dubai          | 1         | .3      | .3            |
| Guildford      | 1         | .3      | .3            |
| Hufoof         | 1         | .3      | .3            |
| Jazan          | 2         | .6      | .6            |
| Khamis mushait | 1         | .3      | .3            |
| Kharj          | 2         | .6      | .6            |
| Mecca          | 4         | 1.1     | 1.1           |
| Medina         | 5         | 1.4     | 1.4           |
| Melbourn       | 1         | .3      | .3            |
| Missing        | 2         | .6      | .6            |
| Najran         | 1         | .3      | .3            |
| Qassim         | 17        | 4.7     | 4.7           |
| Qatif          | 2         | .6      | .6            |
| Sajer          | 1         | .3      | .3            |
| Skaka          | 1         | .3      | .3            |
| Tabook         | 1         | .3      | .3            |
| Taif           | 13        | 3.6     | 3.6           |
| Yonbu          | 2         | .6      | .6            |
| Total          | 363       | 100.0   | 100.0         |

Table 66 Other cities

### 6.2.2. Social media networks used by respondents

Figure 59 presents the social media networks that the respondents use. The results show that 324 (89%) out of 363 respondents have accounts on Twitter, followed by Instagram and Snapchat with 304 (83%) respondents for each have accounts on both. YouTube users constitute (68%). 201 out of 363 respondents have an account on Facebook. The least used social media network by the respondents is Pinterest with 89 out of 363 respondents stating having an account on it.

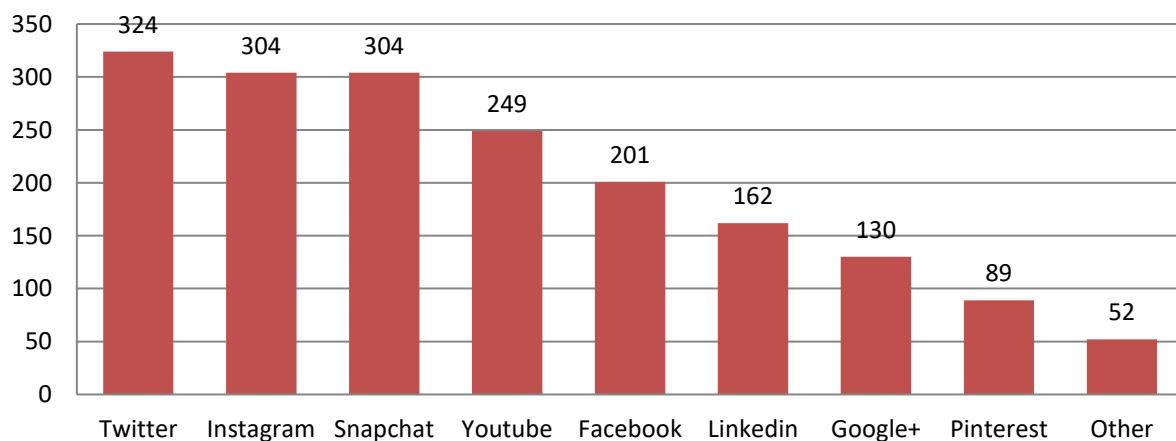


Figure 59 Social media that users have accounts on

### 6.2.3. The frequency of using social media by the respondents

Figure 60 presents the rate of accessing social media by the respondents. The most frequently accessed social media network according to the respondents is Snapchat with 71% of the respondents use it daily, followed by Twitter with 65% access it daily, then Instagram with 60% and YouTube with 54%. On the other hand, 65% of the participants indicate that they never access Pinterest whereas 60% said they never use Google+.

### 6.2.4. The average usage of social media networks based on median

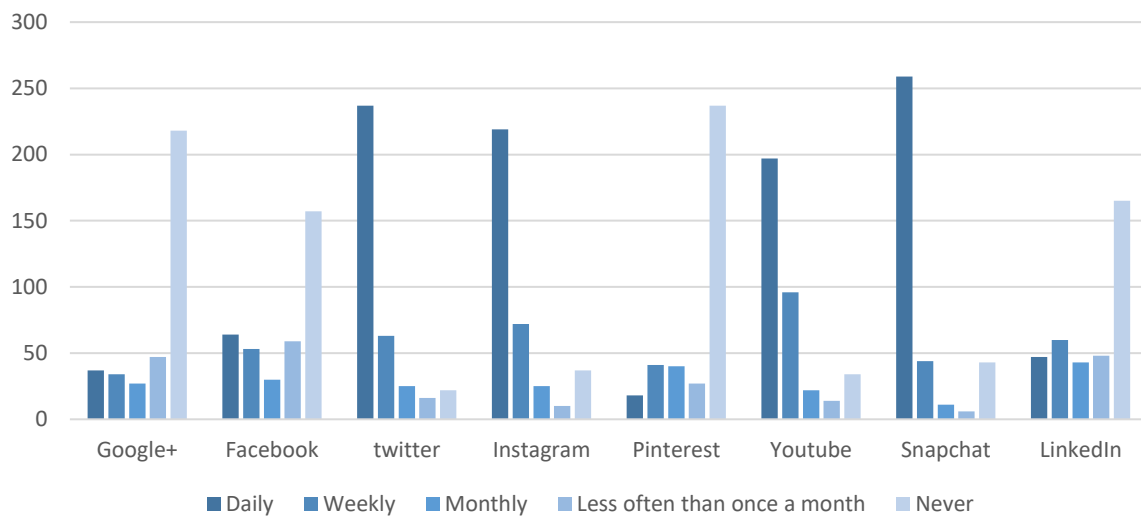


Figure 60 the frequency of accessing social media by respondents

The

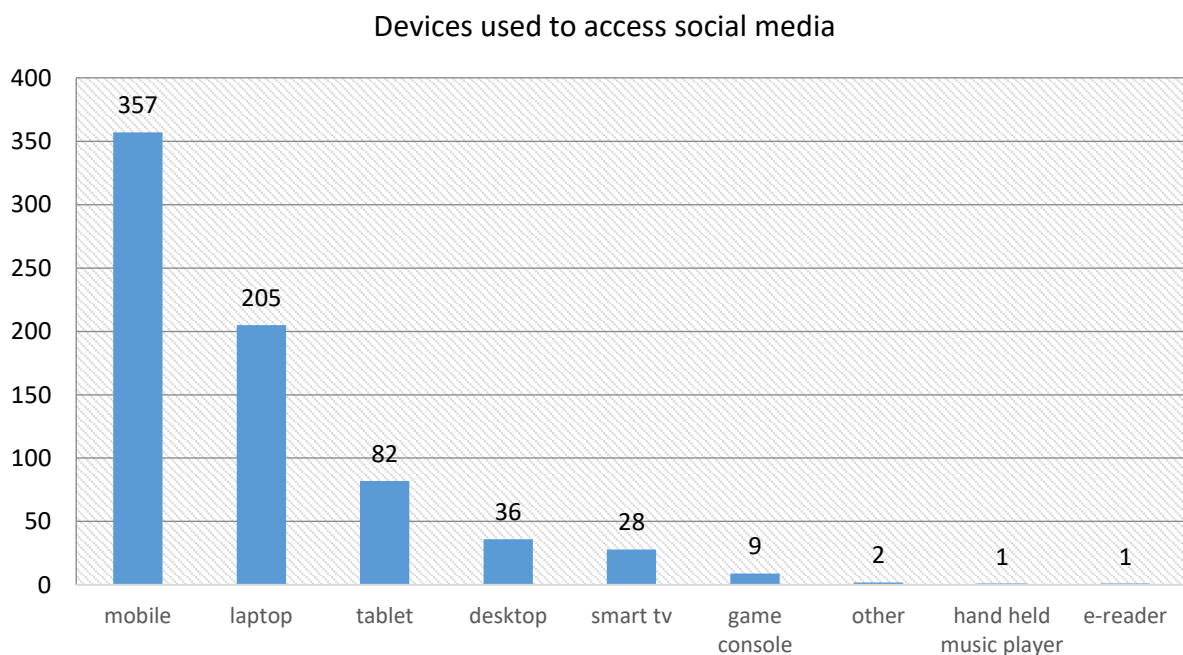
social media usage frequency data in figure 60 was analysed to find the average usage for each social media account using SPSS based on the median since the data is ordinal. Table 67 below presents the median for each social media network coded as follows: 1= daily, 2= Weekly, 3= monthly, 4= less often than once a month, 5= never.

| Table 67 Average social media access frequency |         |           |          |          |           |
|--|---------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|
|  |         | Google+   | Facebook | Twitter  | Instagram |
| N  | Valid   | 363       | 363      | 363      | 363       |
|  | Missing | 0         | 0        | 0        | 0         |
| Median   |         | 5.0000    | 4.0000   | 1.0000   | 1.0000    |
| Mode   |         | 5.00      | 5.00     | 1.00     | 1.00      |
|  |         | Pinterest | YouTube  | Snaphcat | LinkedIn  |
| N  | Valid   | 363       | 363      | 363      | 363       |
|  | Missing | 0         | 0        | 0        | 0         |
| Median   |         | 5.0000    | 1.0000   | 1.0000   | 4.0000    |
| Mode   |         | 5.00      | 1.00     | 1.00     | 5.00      |

The average usage of Google+ by Saudi respondents is never (5), whereas the average usage of Facebook is less often than once a month. The average use of Twitter is daily (1) similarly, the average access to Instagram is daily (1). When it comes to Pinterest, the average access to it is never (5) whereas for both YouTube and Snapchat the average access to them is daily (1). Finally, the average access to LinkedIn is less often than once a month (4). Based on these results, it is concluded that Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and Snapchat are accessed daily on average by social media users in Saudi Arabia.

#### 6.2.5. Devices used by respondents to access social media

98% access social media via mobile phones while 56% access them via laptops. 22% stated using social media via tablets and only 9% use desktops to access social media. 7% access social media via smart TVs. Figure 61 presents the full data.



**Figure 61 Devices used by respondents to access social media**

### 6.2.6. The device used most of the time to access social media

Figure 62 presents device used most of the times to access their social media accounts. The most used device to access social media by Saudi consumers is a mobile phone with a majority of 94%, followed by laptops with 2% and tablets also with 2%.

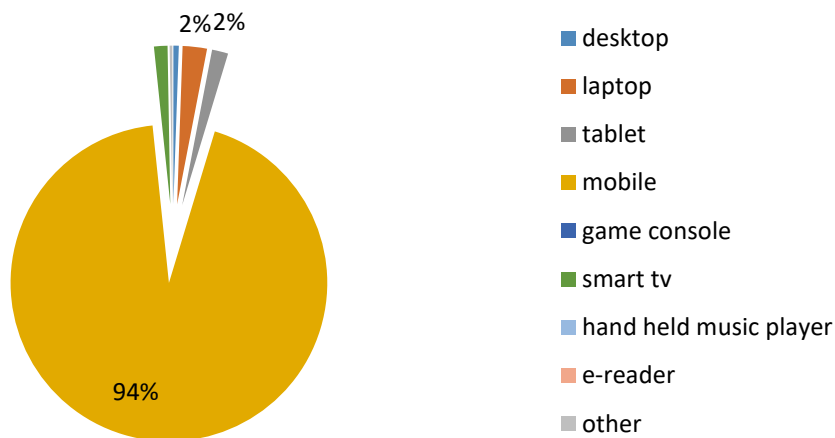


Figure 62 Devices use mostly to access social media

### 6.2.7. The favourite social media platform to communicate with companies

When asked which social media is their favourite channel to communicate with companies, the majority chose Twitter then Instagram. Snapchat comes third, whereas the least favourite channel is Pinterest as seen in figure 63.

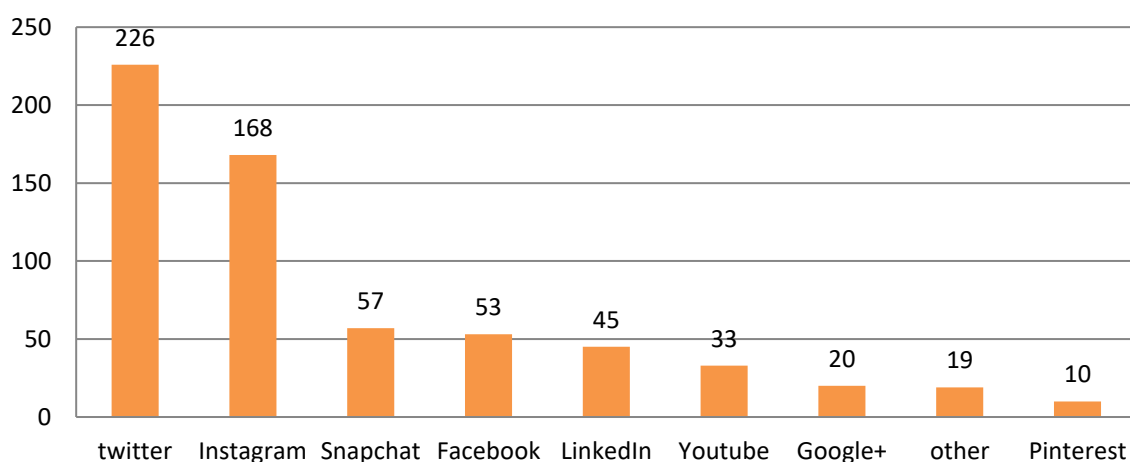


Figure 63 Favourite social media to communicate with companies



### 6.2.8. Type of actions done by consumers on corporate social media accounts

In this question, the respondents were given 18 statements related to 18 different activities done by users on corporate social media accounts using 5 points Likert type scale. The reliability test result will be presented next before presenting the actions results.

#### 6.2.8.1. Reliability test for actions (18 items)

Table 68 presents the reliability analysis result which was carried out on statements related to the type of activities done by consumers on corporate social media accounts comprising 18 items. Cronbach's alpha showed the questionnaire to reach high reliability,  $\alpha = 0.94$ . The 18 items seem worthy of retention, resulting in a decrease in the alpha if deleted.

| Reliability Statistics |            |
|------------------------|------------|
| Cronbach's Alpha       | N of Items |
| .942                   | 18         |

Table 68 Reliability test for 18 items of actions done on social media

| Item-Total Statistics |                            |                                |                                  |                                  |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
|                       | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
| Action_1              | 36.4656                    | 205.730                        | .493                             | .942                             |
| Action_2              | 36.2342                    | 206.307                        | .494                             | .942                             |
| Action_3              | 37.2011                    | 204.133                        | .646                             | .939                             |
| Action_4              | 36.8788                    | 201.317                        | .676                             | .938                             |
| Action_5              | 36.7025                    | 200.701                        | .661                             | .938                             |
| Action_6              | 36.7658                    | 199.672                        | .743                             | .937                             |
| Action_7              | 36.9366                    | 201.629                        | .687                             | .938                             |
| Action_8              | 36.8815                    | 201.055                        | .716                             | .937                             |
| Action_9              | 36.8871                    | 200.879                        | .723                             | .937                             |
| Action_10             | 37.0551                    | 202.002                        | .725                             | .937                             |
| Action_11             | 37.1074                    | 200.538                        | .762                             | .937                             |
| Action_12             | 36.6997                    | 198.791                        | .730                             | .937                             |
| Action_13             | 36.8815                    | 201.746                        | .712                             | .937                             |
| Action_14             | 36.6061                    | 200.632                        | .698                             | .938                             |
| Action_15             | 37.1212                    | 202.604                        | .688                             | .938                             |
| Action_16             | 36.7934                    | 203.888                        | .597                             | .940                             |
| Action_17             | 36.9063                    | 202.207                        | .648                             | .939                             |
| Action_18             | 36.7355                    | 202.433                        | .645                             | .939                             |

#### 6.2.8.2. Type & frequency of interaction on corporate social media account

The respondents were asked the following question: *How often do you perform the following actions?* Then, they were given 18 statements related to 18 different activities done by

consumers on corporate social media accounts and 5 points Likert scale responses as follows:

Daily, weekly, monthly, less often than once a month and finally never. Table 69 presents the 18 actions with the results represented in a bar chart.

Activity

Frequency of making the activity

1. Join corporate social media account (e.g. to like Facebook pages, follow Twitter account, subscribe to YouTube channel etc.)

|                              | count | percent |
|------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Never                        | 99    | 27.3    |
| Less often than once a month | 106   | 29.2    |
| Monthly                      | 53    | 14.6    |
| Weekly                       | 78    | 21.5    |
| Daily                        | 27    | 7.4     |
| Total                        | 363   | 100.0   |

|                              |     |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Never                        | 99  |
| Less often than once a month | 106 |
| Monthly                      | 53  |
| Weekly                       | 78  |
| Daily                        | 27  |

2. Visit corporate social media accounts

|                              | Count | percer |
|------------------------------|-------|--------|
| Never                        | 79    | 21.    |
| Less often than once a month | 81    | 22.    |
| Monthly                      | 74    | 20.    |
| Weekly                       | 107   | 29.    |
| Daily                        | 22    | 6.     |
| Total                        | 363   | 100.   |

|                              |     |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Never                        | 79  |
| Less often than once a month | 81  |
| Monthly                      | 74  |
| Weekly                       | 107 |
| Daily                        | 22  |

3. Invite friends to join corporate social media accounts

|                              | Count | percent |
|------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Never                        | 210   | 57.9    |
| Less often than once a month | 70    | 19.3    |
| Monthly                      | 37    | 10.2    |
| Weekly                       | 41    | 11.3    |
| Daily                        | 5     | 1.4     |
| Total                        | 363   | 100.0   |

|                              |     |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Never                        | 210 |
| Less often than once a month | 70  |
| Monthly                      | 37  |
| Weekly                       | 41  |
| Daily                        | 5   |

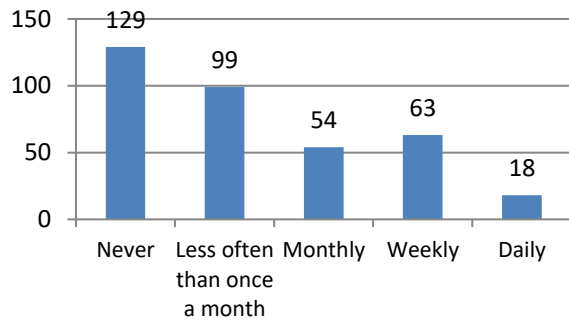
4. Mention a brand/organisation in a post, status update, or a tweet

|                              | count | percent |
|------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Never                        | 153   | 42.1    |
| Less often than once a month | 93    | 25.6    |
| Monthly                      | 51    | 14.0    |
| Weekly                       | 55    | 15.2    |
| Daily                        | 11    | 3.0     |
| Total                        | 363   | 100.0   |

|                              |     |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Never                        | 153 |
| Less often than once a month | 93  |
| Monthly                      | 51  |
| Weekly                       | 55  |
| Daily                        | 11  |

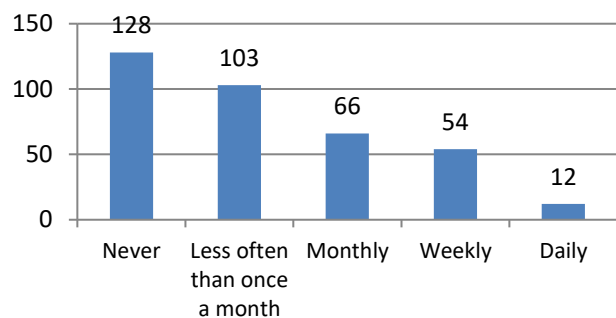
**5. Interact with corporate social media accounts (interaction includes: Reply, like, comment, share, retweet, favourite, etc.)**

|                              | count | percent |
|------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Never                        | 129   | 35.5    |
| Less often than once a month | 99    | 27.3    |
| Monthly                      | 54    | 14.9    |
| Weekly                       | 63    | 17.4    |
| Daily                        | 18    | 5.0     |
| Total                        | 363   | 100.0   |



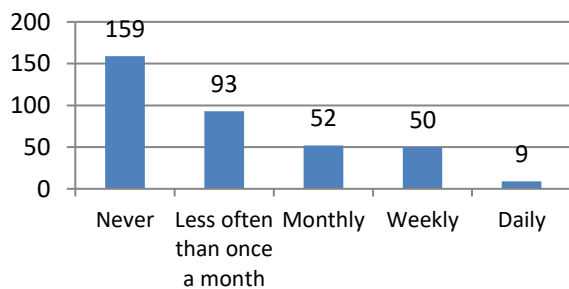
**6. Use a public post on corporate social media account to ask for additional information about product/service**

|                              | count | percent |
|------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Never                        | 128   | 35.3    |
| Less often than once a month | 103   | 28.4    |
| Monthly                      | 66    | 18.2    |
| Weekly                       | 54    | 14.9    |
| Daily                        | 12    | 3.3     |
| Total                        | 363   | 100.0   |



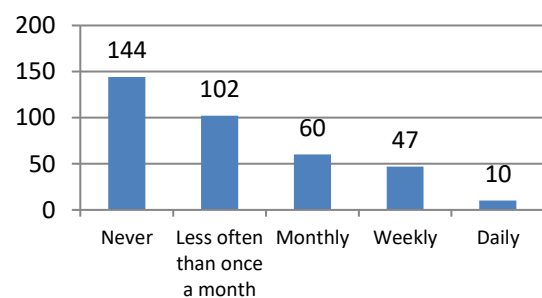
**7. Use a public post on corporate social media accounts to complain/negatively comment about product/service**

|                              | count | percent |
|------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Never                        | 159   | 43.8    |
| Less often than once a month | 93    | 25.6    |
| Monthly                      | 52    | 14.3    |
| Weekly                       | 50    | 13.8    |
| Daily                        | 9     | 2.5     |
| Total                        | 363   | 100.0   |



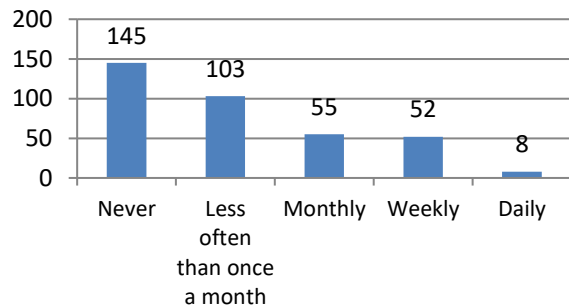
**8. Use public posts on corporate social media accounts to express appreciation/gratitude about a product or service**

|                              | count | percent |
|------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Never                        | 144   | 39.7    |
| Less often than once a month | 102   | 28.1    |
| Monthly                      | 60    | 16.5    |
| Weekly                       | 47    | 12.9    |
| Daily                        | 10    | 2.8     |
| Total                        | 363   | 100.0   |



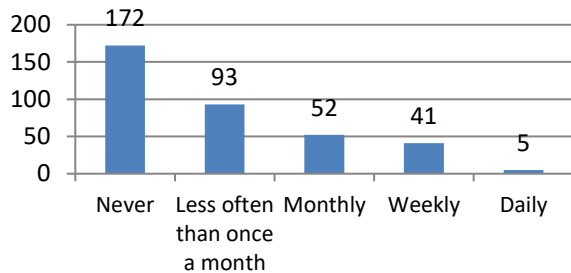
**9. Use direct messaging (DM) on corporate social media accounts to request additional information about a product/service**

|                              | count | percent |
|------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Never                        | 145   | 39.9    |
| Less often than once a month | 103   | 28.4    |
| Monthly                      | 55    | 15.2    |
| Weekly                       | 52    | 14.3    |
| Daily                        | 8     | 2.2     |
| Total                        | 363   | 100.0   |



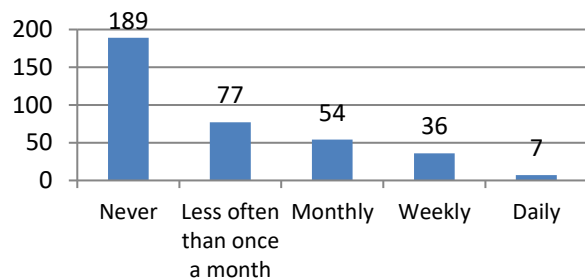
**10. Use direct messaging (DM) on corporate social media accounts to complain/negatively comment about a product or service**

|                              | count | percent |
|------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Never                        | 172   | 47.4    |
| Less often than once a month | 93    | 25.6    |
| Monthly                      | 52    | 14.3    |
| Weekly                       | 41    | 11.3    |
| Daily                        | 5     | 1.4     |
| Total                        | 363   | 100.0   |



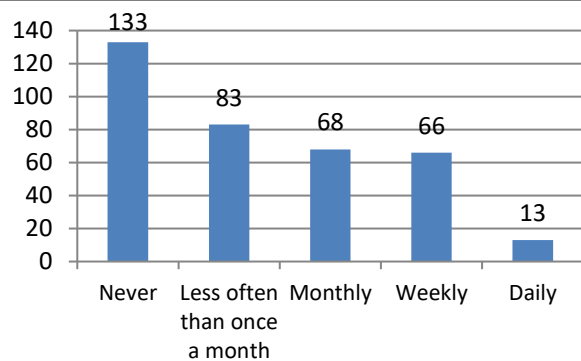
**11. Use direct messaging (DM) on corporate social media accounts to express appreciation/gratitude**

|                              | count | percent |
|------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Never                        | 189   | 52.1    |
| Less often than once a month | 77    | 21.2    |
| Monthly                      | 54    | 14.9    |
| Weekly                       | 36    | 9.9     |
| Daily                        | 7     | 1.9     |
| Total                        | 363   | 100.0   |



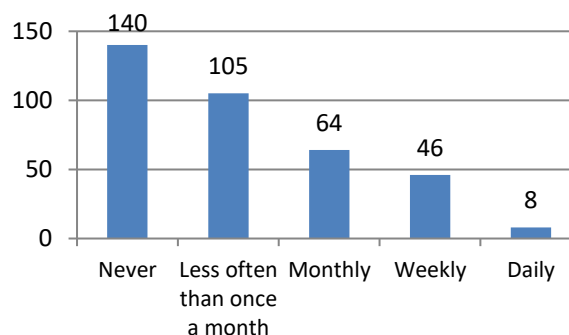
**12. Recommend a product or service by tagging your friends in posts by corporate social media accounts**

|                              | count | percent |
|------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Never                        | 133   | 36.6    |
| Less often than once a month | 83    | 22.9    |
| Monthly                      | 68    | 18.7    |
| Weekly                       | 66    | 18.2    |
| Daily                        | 13    | 3.6     |
| Total                        | 363   | 100.0   |

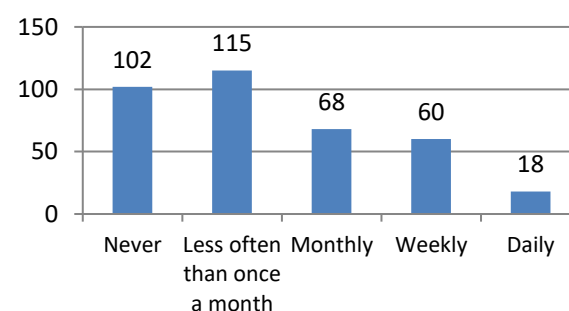


**13. Purchase products/service directly through corporate social media accounts**

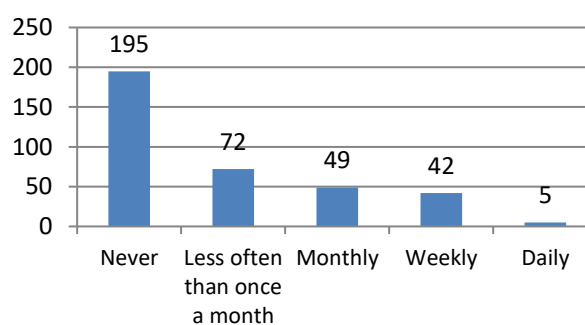
|                              | count | percent |
|------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Never                        | 140   | 38.6    |
| Less often than once a month | 105   | 28.9    |
| Monthly                      | 64    | 17.6    |
| Weekly                       | 46    | 12.7    |
| Daily                        | 8     | 2.2     |
| Total                        | 363   | 100.0   |

**14. Take advantage of offers displayed on corporate social media accounts**

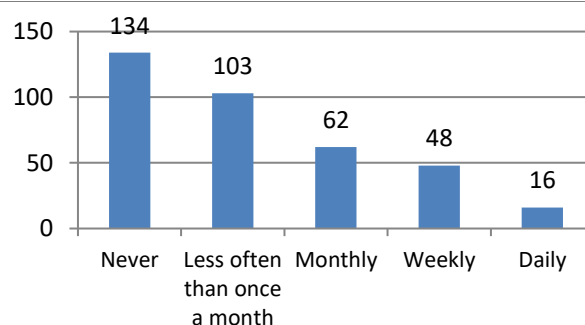
|                              | count | percent |
|------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Never                        | 102   | 28.1    |
| Less often than once a month | 115   | 31.7    |
| Monthly                      | 68    | 18.7    |
| Weekly                       | 60    | 16.5    |
| Daily                        | 18    | 5.0     |
| Total                        | 363   | 100.0   |

**15. Take part in a competition, promotion, prize draw on corporate social media accounts**

|                              | count | percent |
|------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Never                        | 195   | 53.7    |
| Less often than once a month | 72    | 19.8    |
| Monthly                      | 49    | 13.5    |
| Weekly                       | 42    | 11.6    |
| Daily                        | 5     | 1.4     |
| Total                        | 363   | 100.0   |

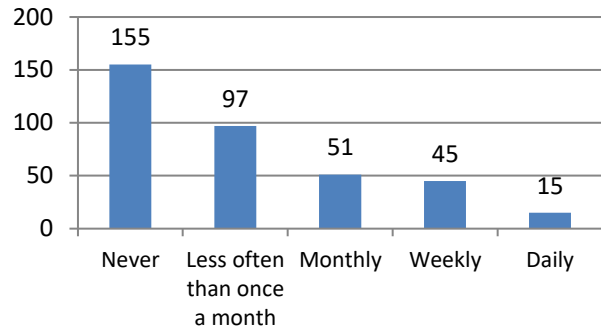
**16. Click on advertisements displayed on social media by brands you follow**

|                              | count | percent |
|------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Never                        | 134   | 36.9    |
| Less often than once a month | 103   | 28.4    |
| Monthly                      | 62    | 17.1    |
| Weekly                       | 48    | 13.2    |
| Daily                        | 16    | 4.4     |
| Total                        | 363   | 100.0   |



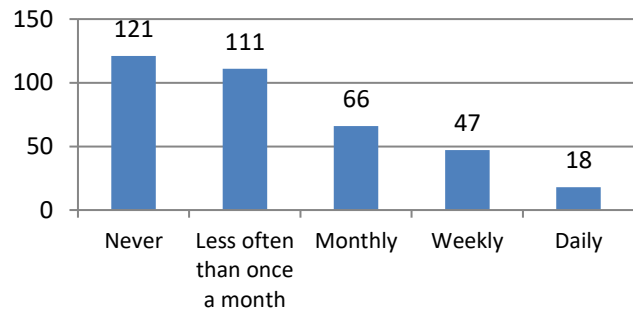
**17. Click on advertisements displayed on social media by brands you DO NOT follow on social media**

|                              | count | percent |
|------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Never                        | 155   | 42.7    |
| Less often than once a month | 97    | 26.7    |
| Monthly                      | 51    | 14.0    |
| Weekly                       | 45    | 12.4    |
| Daily                        | 15    | 4.1     |
| Total                        | 363   | 100.0   |



**18. Join a corporate social media account after seeing their advertisement on social media**

|                              | count | percent |
|------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Never                        | 121   | 33.3    |
| Less often than once a month | 111   | 30.6    |
| Monthly                      | 66    | 18.2    |
| Weekly                       | 47    | 12.9    |
| Daily                        | 18    | 5.0     |
| Total                        | 363   | 100.0   |



**Table 69 18 statements of actions done by consumers on corporate social media accounts**

### 6.2.8.3. Average response to 18 statements - Central tendency

After presenting the counts of responses to each action, the next step was to calculate the central tendency (average) of each action. Using SPSS, the median was calculated since the type of data is ordinal. The Likert scale responses were coded as follows: Never = 1, Less often than once a month = 2, Monthly = 3, Weekly = 4, Daily = 5. Tables 70, 71 and 72 present the average for each action based on the median.

**Average action**

|         | Action 1 | Action 2 | Action 3 | Action 4 | Action 5 | Action 6 | Action 7 |
|---------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| N Valid | 363      | 363      | 363      | 363      | 363      | 363      | 363      |
| Missing | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| Median  | 2.0000   | 3.0000   | 1.0000   | 2.0000   | 2.0000   | 2.0000   | 2.0000   |

**Table 70 Average response for the 18 actions**

**Statistics**

|         | Action 8 | Action 9 | Action 10 | Action 11 | Action 12 | Action 13 | Action 14 |
|---------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| N Valid | 363      | 363      | 363       | 363       | 363       | 363       | 363       |
| Missing | 0        | 0        | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         |
| Median  | 2.0000   | 2.0000   | 2.0000    | 1.0000    | 2.0000    | 2.0000    | 2.0000    |

**Table 71 Average response for the 18 actions**

**Statistics**

|         | Action 15 | Action 16 | Action 17 | Action 18 |
|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| N Valid | 363       | 363       | 363       | 363       |
| Missing | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         |
| Median  | 1.0000    | 2.0000    | 2.0000    | 2.0000    |

**Table 72 Average response for 18 actions**

As seen in the tables 70, 71 and 72 the most frequent action done by Saudi consumers on corporate social media accounts is action 2: Visiting the corporate social media channels, with

the median being 3, which refers to doing the act monthly on average. On the other hand, the actions that consumers (never) do on an average are: Action 3: Invite friends to join corporate social media accounts and Action 11: Use direct messaging (DM) on corporate social media accounts to express appreciation/ gratitude. The same applies to Action 15: Take part in a competition, promotion, prize draw on corporate social media accounts; these 3 actions showed a median of 1 which refers to (Never) doing them. The rest of the activities got an average of 2 which indicates doing them less often than once a month.

#### 6.2.9. Chi-square test of association between social media the consumers use and demographical variables

| Demographics  | Social media | <i>P</i> | Value  |
|---------------|--------------|----------|--------|
| <b>Gender</b> | Facebook     | .001     | 11.307 |
|               | Instagram    | .000     | 25.628 |
| <b>Degree</b> | Snapchat     | .020     | 15.017 |
|               | LinkedIn     | .044     | 12.928 |
| <b>Income</b> | Facebook     | .002     | 17.197 |
|               | Instagram    | .038     | 10.154 |
|               | LinkedIn     | .000     | 22.931 |
| <b>City</b>   | Facebook     | .001     | 18.867 |
|               | YouTube      | .010     | 13.319 |
| <b>Age</b>    | Google+      | .001     | 19.006 |
|               | Facebook     | .009     | 13.541 |
| <b>gender</b> | Action 7     | .018     | 11.861 |
|               | Action 17    | .020     | 11.680 |

**Table 73** The significant associations between demographics with both social media used and actions.

Table 73 presents the significant chi-square test of association between demographics, actions and social media used by the respondents. The results show that there is an association between gender of respondents and using Facebook and Instagram. Also, there is an association between the educational degree of the respondents and using Snapchat and LinkedIn. On the other hand, the monthly income of respondents is associated with using Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram. The City is associated with using Facebook and YouTube, whereas the age of respondents is associated with using Facebook and Google+.

The same test was performed between demographical variables and the 18 actions that consumers perform on corporate social media accounts. The results show that gender is

associated with action 7 "Use public post on corporate social media accounts to complain or negatively comment about product/service". Similarly, age is associated with action 17 "Join corporate SM account after seeing their advertisement on social media". The associations discussed here and presented in table 61 are illustrated in the series of figures below.

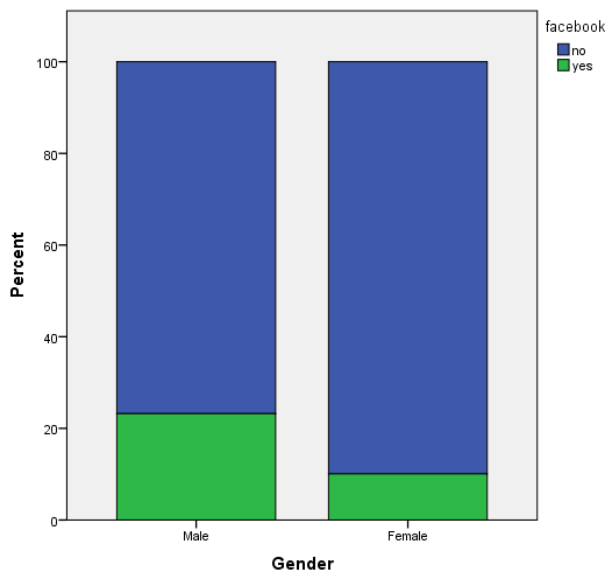


Figure 65 Association between using facebook and gender

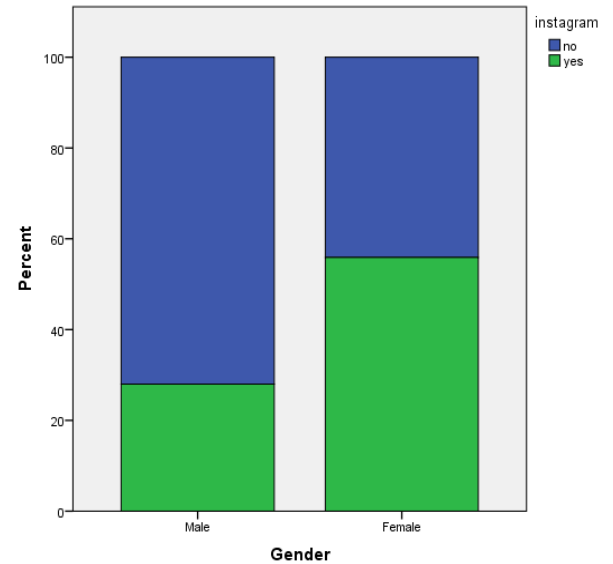


Figure 64 Association between using instagram and gender

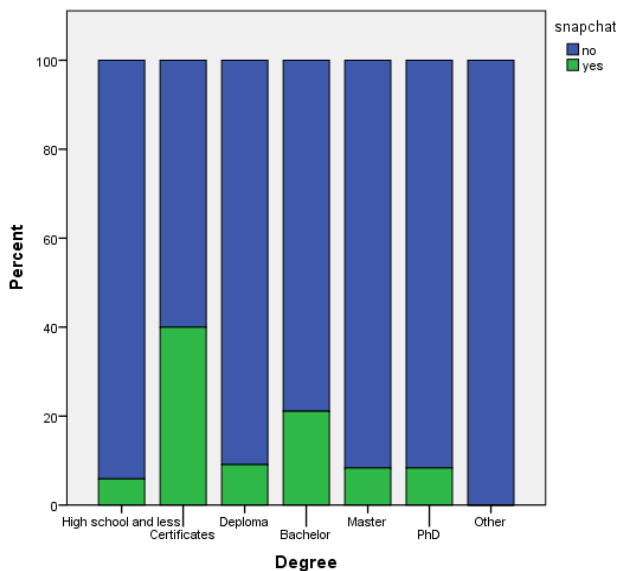


Figure 67 Association between using snapchat and the degree

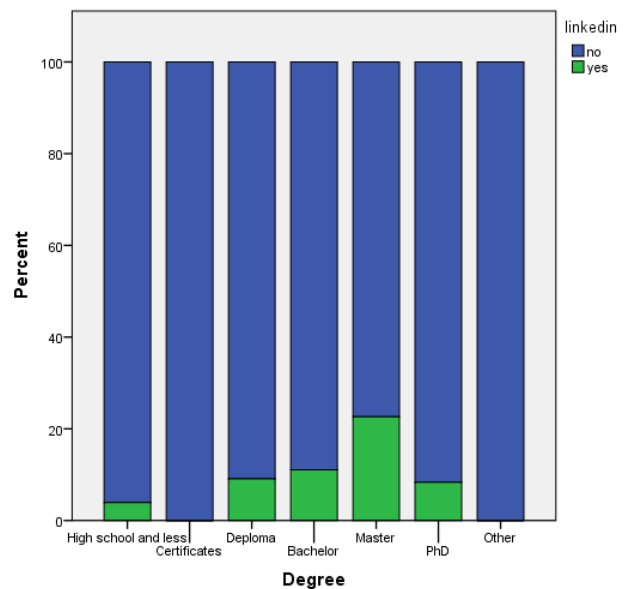


Figure 66 Association between using linkedin and degree



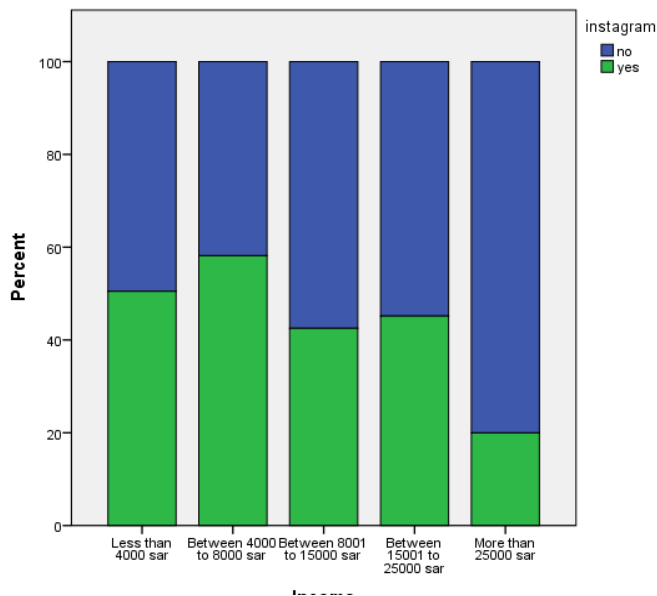


Figure 71 Association between using instagram and income

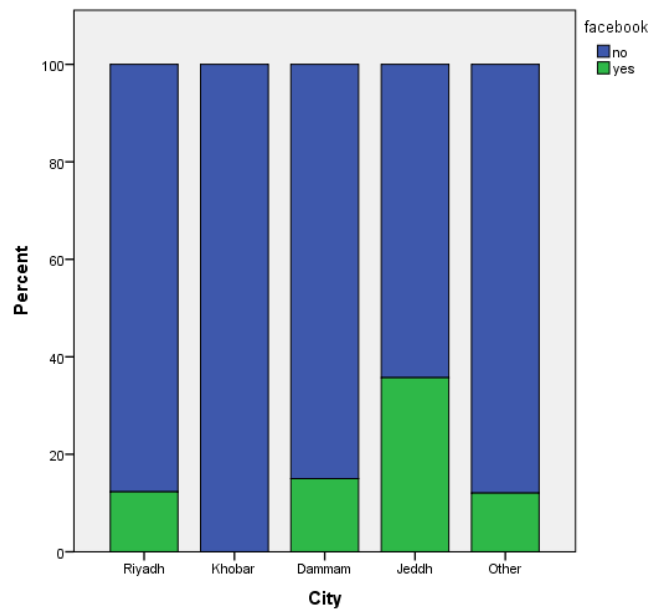


Figure 72 Association between using facebook and city

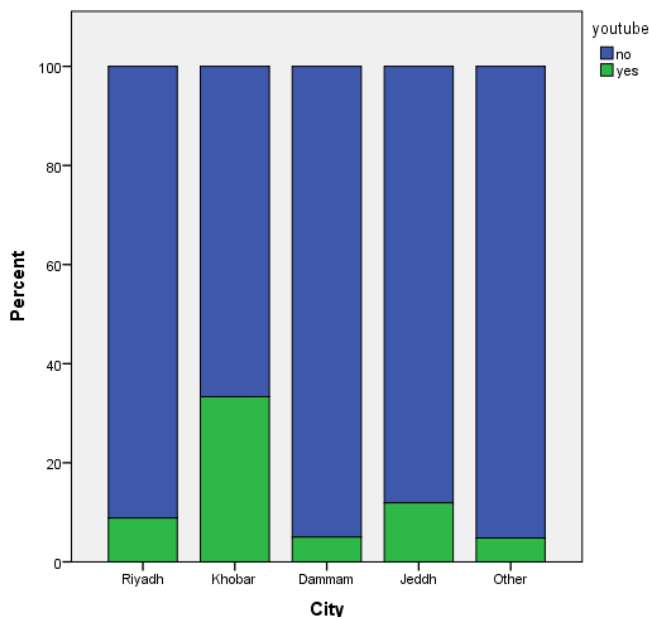


Figure 70 Association between using youtube and city

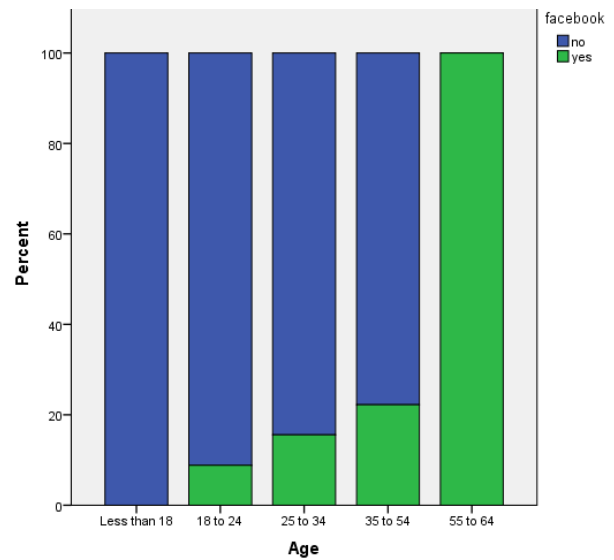
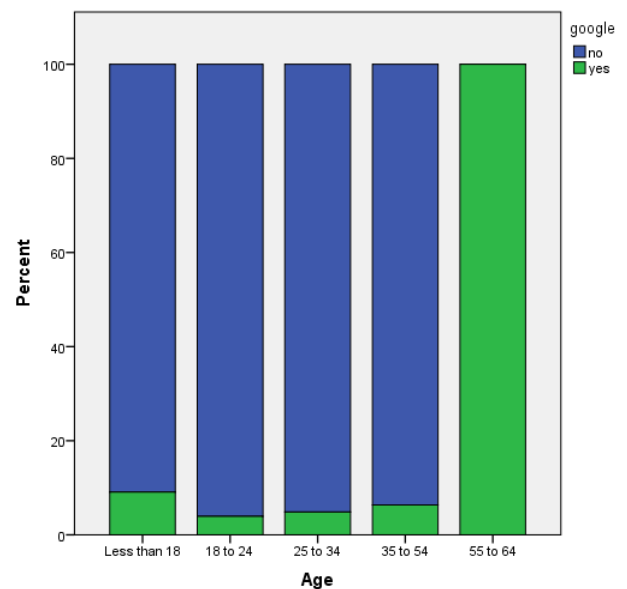


Figure 68 Association between using facebook and age

Figure 69 association between using google and age



### 6.2.10. Perceived usefulness of social media as a communication tool with companies

Seven statements measuring the perceived usefulness of social media as a communication tool with companies were part of the survey using 5 points Likert scale type method (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree).

The responses were coded using SPSS, "disagree" and "strongly disagree" were gathered in one category as (Reject= 1). Similarly, "strongly agree" and "agree" were gathered in one category as (Accept= 3), whereas the neutral was put in one category (Neutral =2) and the results are presented in table 74. The majority of respondents agree on the usefulness of social media as a tool for communicating with companies. The next step was to analyse the average for each statement based on the median as the data is ordinal and the results are presented in the next section.

| Perceived usefulness statements  | Accept | Neutral | Reject |
|--|--------|---------|--------|
| P_use_1. Social media is a good channel to learn about products and services I am interested in                        | 92.6%  | 5.5%    | 1.9%   |
| P_use_2. Social media is a good channel to voice my satisfaction or dissatisfaction with a product, service or company | 82.9   | 12.4%   | 4.7%   |
| P_use_3. Social media enables my voice to be heard by companies  | 68.3%  | 25.1%   | 6.6%   |
| P_use_4. Social media is a good channel for dialogue with companies  | 71.9%  | 19.8%   | 8.3%   |
| P_use_5. Social media is just another channel for companies to burden me with advertising                              | 56.2%  | 30.3%   | 13.5%  |
| P_use_6. Most companies do not have sufficient knowledge about how social media should be used                         | 54%    | 33.3%   | 12.7%  |
| P_use_7. In general, I believe interaction with companies in social media can be useful for me as a consumer           | 81%    | 14.6%   | 4.4%   |

Table 74 Results of 7 perceived usefulness statements

#### 6.2.10.1. Central tendency – perceived usefulness

The average response based on the median to all seven statements related to the perceived usefulness of social media as a communication tool with companies show number 3 which is (Accept) as presented in table 75 and 76.

**Statistics (3 points scale)**

|        |         | P use 1 | P use 2 | P use 3 | P use 4 | P use 5 | P use 6 | P use 7 |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| N      | Valid   | 363     | 363     | 363     | 363     | 363     | 363     | 363     |
|        | Missing | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       |
| Mean   |         | 2.9063  | 2.7824  | 2.6171  | 2.6364  | 2.4270  | 2.4132  | 2.7658  |
| Median |         | 3.0000  | 3.0000  | 3.0000  | 3.0000  | 3.0000  | 3.0000  | 3.0000  |
| Mode   |         | 3.00    | 3.00    | 3.00    | 3.00    | 3.00    | 3.00    | 3.00    |

**Table 75 Average response for perceived usefulness statements (3 points scales)****Statistics (5 points Likert scale)**

|        |         | P use 1 | P use 2 | P use 3 | P use 4 | P use 5 | P use 6 | P use 7 |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| N      | Valid   | 363     | 363     | 363     | 363     | 363     | 363     | 363     |
|        | Missing | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       |
| Mean   |         | 4.4490  | 4.2011  | 3.9835  | 3.9311  | 3.6226  | 3.5702  | 4.0992  |
| Median |         | 5.0000  | 4.0000  | 4.0000  | 4.0000  | 4.0000  | 4.0000  | 4.0000  |
| Mode   |         | 5.00    | 5.00    | 5.00    | 4.00    | 4.00    | 4.00    | 4.00    |

**Table 76 Average response to Perceived usefulness statements (5 points scale)****6.2.10.2. Reliability test (Perceived usefulness items)**

A reliability test was performed on the perceived usefulness of corporate social media accounts statements comprising seven items. Cronbach's alpha showed the items to reach acceptable reliability,  $\alpha = 0.78$  as shown in table 77. The items are worthy of keeping, resulting in a drop in the alpha if deleted. Except items 5 and 6 which would increase the Cronbach's alpha to 0.80 if removed.

| Reliability Statistics |  |            |
|------------------------|--|------------|
| Cronbach's Alpha       | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
|                        | .786   | 7          |

**Table 77 Reliability test for perceived usefulness items**

| Item-Total Statistics |                            |                                |                                  |                              |                                  |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
|                       | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Squared Multiple Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
| P_use 1               | 23.4077                    | 15.087                         | .532                             | .367                         | .760                             |
| P_use 2               | 23.6556                    | 13.558                         | .649                             | .514                         | .734                             |
| P_use 3               | 23.8733                    | 12.636                         | .698                             | .623                         | .719                             |
| P_use 4               | 23.9256                    | 12.947                         | .685                             | .590                         | .724                             |
| P_use 5               | 24.2342                    | 15.047                         | .286                             | .123                         | .808                             |
| P_use 6               | 24.2865                    | 15.282                         | .285                             | .113                         | .805                             |
| P_use 7               | 23.7576                    | 14.173                         | .565                             | .390                         | .750                             |

**6.2.11. Perceived ease of use of social media as a communication tool with companies**

The survey included 4 statements to measure perceived social media ease of use. Table 78 shows that the majority of respondents agree that social media is an easy and fast way to communicate with companies. The average response for each statement will be presented next.

| Perceived ease of use Statement   | Accept | Neutral | Reject |
|---|--------|---------|--------|
| P_ease-1. Interacting with companies through social media seems more convenient than through other communication channels | 74.1%  | 17.9%   | 8%     |
| P_ease-2. Interacting with companies through social media seems faster than through other communication channels          | 75.8%  | 15.7%   | 8.5%   |
| P_ease-3. Interacting with companies through social media seems more informal than through other communication channels   | 77.1%  | 16%     | 6.9%   |
| P_ease-4. I find it easier to communicate with companies through social media than through other communication channels   | 77.4%  | 14.9%   | 7.7%   |

Table 78 Result of perceived usefulness statements

#### 6.2.11.1. Central tendency – perceived ease of use

When it comes to perceived ease of use of social media as a communication tool with companies according to Saudi consumers, the average response is 3 which is (Accept) to all four statements as shown in tables 79 and 80.

##### Statistics (3 points scale)

|        |         | P_ease_1 | P_ease_2 | P_ease_3 | P_ease_4 |
|--------|---------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| N      | Valid   | 363      | 363      | 363      | 363      |
|        | Missing | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| Mean   |         | 2.6612   | 2.6722   | 2.7025   | 2.6970   |
| Median |         | 3.0000   | 3.0000   | 3.0000   | 3.0000   |
| Mode   |         | 3.00     | 3.00     | 3.00     | 3.00     |

Table 79 Average response to perceived ease of use statements (3 points scale)

##### Statistics (5points Likert scale)

|        |         | P_ease_1 | P_ease_2 | P_ease_3 | P_ease_4 |
|--------|---------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| N      | Valid   | 363      | 363      | 363      | 363      |
|        | Missing | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| Mean   |         | 4.0083   | 4.0606   | 4.0110   | 4.0992   |
| Median |         | 4.0000   | 4.0000   | 4.0000   | 4.0000   |
| Mode   |         | 4.00     | 5.00     | 4.00     | 5.00     |

Table 80 Average response to perceive ease of use statements (5 points scale)

#### 6.2.11.2. Reliability test (Perceived ease of use 4 items)

A reliability analysis was carried out using SPSS on the perceived ease of use of social media comprising four items. Cronbach's alpha showed the statements to reach high reliability,  $\alpha = 0.84$  as shown in table 81. All items are worthy of keeping, resulting in a reduction in the alpha if deleted, except item 3.

| Reliability Statistics |  |            |
|------------------------|--|------------|
| Cronbach's Alpha       | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
| .847                   | .845   | 4          |

Table 81 Reliability test for ease of use statements

**Item-Total Statistics**

|          | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Squared Multiple Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|----------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| P ease 1 | 12.1708                    | 5.805                          | .751                             | .611                         | .777                             |
| P ease 2 | 12.1185                    | 5.657                          | .779                             | .639                         | .764                             |
| P ease 3 | 12.1680                    | 7.030                          | .492                             | .245                         | .881                             |
| P ease 4 | 12.0799                    | 5.803                          | .729                             | .561                         | .786                             |

### 6.2.12. Attitude towards communicating with companies via corporate social media accounts

The survey included three statements to measure the attitude of consumers towards communicating with companies via social media. Table 82 presents the statements with their results. The results show that more than half of the respondents agreed with the statements. The average response for each item was analysed, and the result will be presented in the next section.

| Attitude statements  | Accept | Neutral | Reject |
|--|--------|---------|--------|
| Attitude_1- I would like to communicate with companies that I am interested in through social media  | 57.3%  | 33.3%   | 9.4%   |
| Attitude_2- It is likely that I will use social media to communicate with companies                  | 59.5%  | 32.8%   | 7.7%   |
| Attitude_3- Overall, my attitude towards interaction with companies through social media is positive | 58.7%  | 36.6%   | 4.7%   |

Table 82 Results of consumers' attitude statements

#### 6.2.12.1. Central tendency - Attitude

When it comes to the attitude of Saudi consumers towards using social media to communicate with companies, we can see in tables 83 and 84 that the average response is 3 which is (Agree) to all three statements based on the median.

|         | Attituded 1 | Attitude 2 | Attituded 3 |
|---------|-------------|------------|-------------|
| Valid   | 363         | 363        | 363         |
| Missing | 0           | 0          | 0           |
| Mean    | 2.4793      | 2.5179     | 2.5399      |
| Median  | 3.0000      | 3.0000     | 3.0000      |
| Mode    | 3.00        | 3.00       | 3.00        |

Table 83 Average response for attitude statements (3 points scale)

**Statistics (5 points Likert scale)**

|         | Attitude_1 | Attitude_2 | Attitude_3 |
|---------|------------|------------|------------|
| Valid   | 363        | 363        | 363        |
| Missing | 0          | 0          | 0          |
| Mean    | 3.6116     | 3.6226     | 3.6474     |
| Median  | 4.0000     | 4.0000     | 4.0000     |
| Mode    | 4.00       | 4.00       | 4.00       |

**Table 84 Average response for attitude statements (5 points scale)**

### 6.2.12.2. Reliability test (Attitude 3 items)

A reliability analysis was carried out using SPSS on the attitude statements comprising three items. Cronbach's alpha showed the statements to reach high reliability,  $\alpha = 0.88$  as shown in table 85. Most items appeared to be worth keeping.

| Reliability Statistics |  |            |
|------------------------|--|------------|
| Cronbach's Alpha       | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
| .883                   | .884   | 3          |

**Table 85 Reliability test for Attitude statements**

| Item-Total Statistics |                            |                                |                                  |                              |                                  |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
|                       | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Squared Multiple Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
| Attitude_1            | 7.2700                     | 2.452                          | .783                             | .623                         | .828                             |
| Attitude_2            | 7.2590                     | 2.557                          | .805                             | .651                         | .805                             |
| Attitude_3            | 7.2342                     | 2.920                          | .739                             | .549                         | .866                             |

### 6.2.13. Perceived trust and privacy of social media

The survey includes 8 statements to measure the perceived trust and privacy of social media according to the respondents as seen in table 86. In the first statement: I consider it safe to give out personal information on social media, only 15% agreed whereas 55% disagreed. When asked if they worry that the information they share via social media can be seen by others 63% agreed. When asked if they trust the information they read on corporate social media accounts only 34% agreed while 13% disagreed. When asked if it is easy for them to tell whether brands are behaving dishonestly or unethically on social media 46% agreed whereas 22% disagreed. Another question about if it is difficult for them to trust brands on social media 43% agreed whereas 18% disagreed. When they were asked if it is likely for them to boycott a brand if they discovered it is operating unethically on social media,

57% agreed whereas only 6% disagreed. The respondents were also asked if they are afraid that they will have regrets later on about information they share through social media, about 58% agreed while 13% disagreed. When the respondents were asked if they think carefully about what they write on social media to be sure they stand for it later on, 79% agreed while only 3% disagreed. We can sense a general trust and privacy issues expressed by the respondents. In the next section, the average response for each statement was analysed and will be discussed in the next section.

| <b>Trust &amp; privacy statements</b>  | <b>Accept</b> | <b>Neutral</b> | <b>Reject</b> |
|--|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| Trust_1- I consider it safe to give out personal information on social media                                     | 15.7%         | 28.9%          | 55.4%         |
| Trust_2- I worry that information I send through corporate social media accounts can be seen by the wrong people | 63.6%         | 22.6%          | 13.8%         |
| Trust_3- I have trust/confidence in the information I read on corporate social media accounts                    | 34.2%         | 40.8%          | 25.1%         |
| Trust_4- It is easy to tell whether brands are behaving dishonestly or unethically on social media               | 46.0%         | 31.7%          | 22.3%         |
| Trust_5- It is difficult to trust brands on social media   | 43.3%         | 38.8%          | 17.9%         |
| Trust_6- I am likely to boycott a brand if I discovered it was operating unethically on social media             | 75.8%         | 17.9%          | 6.3%          |
| Trust_7- I am afraid that I will have regrets later on about information I share through social media            | 57.9%         | 29.2%          | 12.9%         |
| Trust_8- I think carefully about what I write in social media to be sure I can stand for it in retrospect        | 79.1%         | 17.4%          | 3.6%          |

**Table 86 Results of perceived trust and privacy statements**

#### 6.2.13.1. Central tendency – Perceived trust and privacy

Table 87 and 88 present the average response based on the median for perceived trust and privacy statements according to the respondents. We can see that the average varies between statements as follows: Average 1 (1= Reject) to:

- Trust\_1: I consider it safe to give out personal information on social media.

On the other hands, the average is 3 (3= Accept) to the following statements:

- Trust\_2: I worry that information I send through corporate social media accounts can be seen by the wrong people.
- Trust\_6: I am likely to boycott a brand if I discovered it was operating unethically on social media.

- Trust\_7: I am afraid that I will have regrets later on about information I share through social media.
- Trust\_8: I think carefully about what I write in social media to be sure I can stand for it in retrospect.

Whereas the average is 2 (2= Neutral) to the following statements:

- Trust\_3- I have trust/confidence in the information I read on corporate social media accounts.
- Trust\_4- It is easy to tell whether brands are behaving dishonestly or unethically on social media.
- Trust\_5- It is difficult to trust brands on social media.

**Statistics (3-point Likert scale)**

|        |         | Trust_1 | Trust_2 | Trust_3 | Trust_4 | Trust_5 | Trust_6 | Trust_7 | Trust_8 |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| N      | Valid   | 363     | 363     | 363     | 363     | 363     | 363     | 363     | 363     |
|        | Missing | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       |
| Mean   |         | 1.6033  | 2.4986  | 2.0909  | 2.2369  | 2.2534  | 2.6942  | 2.4490  | 2.7548  |
| Median |         | 1.0000  | 3.0000  | 2.0000  | 2.0000  | 2.0000  | 3.0000  | 3.0000  | 3.0000  |
| Mode   |         | 1.00    | 3.00    | 2.00    | 3.00    | 3.00    | 3.00    | 3.00    | 3.00    |

**Table 87 Average response to trust and privacy statements (3 points scale)**

**Statistics (5-point Likert scale)**

|        |         | Trust_1 | Trust_2 | Trust_3 | Trust_4 | Trust_5 | Trust_6 | Trust_7 | Trust_8 |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| N      | Valid   | 363     | 363     | 363     | 363     | 363     | 363     | 363     | 363     |
|        | Missing | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       |
| Mean   |         | 2.4022  | 3.6832  | 3.0992  | 3.2865  | 3.3333  | 4.1460  | 3.6116  | 4.1543  |
| Median |         | 2.0000  | 4.0000  | 3.0000  | 3.0000  | 3.0000  | 4.0000  | 4.0000  | 4.0000  |
| Mode   |         | 2.00    | 4.00    | 3.00    | 4.00    | 3.00    | 5.00    | 4.00    | 5.00    |

**Table 88 Average response to trust and privacy statements (5 points scale)**



### 6.2.13.2. Reliability test (Perceived trust & privacy 8 items)

A reliability analysis was carried out on the perceived trust & privacy of social media comprising eight items. Cronbach's alpha showed the items to reach reasonable reliability,  $\alpha = 0.57$ . The items appeared to be worthy of retention except item 1 which would increase the Cronbach alpha to 0.61 as seen in table 89.

| Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
|------------------|--|------------|
| .577             | .589   | 8          |

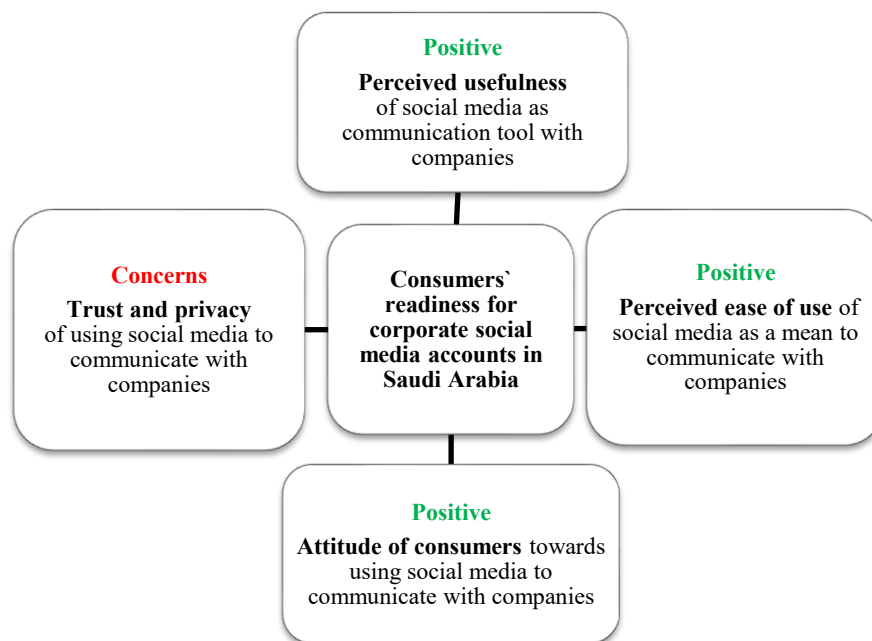
**Table 89 Reliability test for trust and privacy statements**

#### Item-Total Statistics

|         | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Squared Multiple Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|---------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Trust_1 | 25.3140                    | 15.017                         | .078                             | .241                         | .615                             |
| Trust_2 | 24.0331                    | 13.170                         | .355                             | .233                         | .520                             |
| Trust_3 | 24.6171                    | 14.430                         | .221                             | .256                         | .562                             |
| Trust_4 | 24.4298                    | 13.599                         | .277                             | .162                         | .546                             |
| Trust_5 | 24.3829                    | 14.110                         | .258                             | .250                         | .551                             |
| Trust_6 | 23.5702                    | 13.693                         | .298                             | .184                         | .539                             |
| Trust_7 | 24.1047                    | 12.995                         | .419                             | .398                         | .500                             |
| Trust_8 | 23.5620                    | 13.611                         | .413                             | .272                         | .509                             |

### 6.3. Summary of the overall results related to consumers readiness for corporate social media accounts in Saudi Arabia

Figure 73 presents a summary of the results of 4 constructs that intended to measure the consumers' social media readiness for corporate social media accounts in Saudi Arabia.



**Figure 73 Summary of consumers' readiness for corporate SM accounts**

## 6.4. Chapter summary

This chapter presented and discussed the data collection process for research activity C which aims at investigating the consumer social media readiness for corporate social media accounts and to answer the research question: **RQ3:** How ready are the consumers to use corporate social media accounts in Saudi Arabia?

### 7.9.1. The social media networks mostly used by social media users in Saudi Arabia

The results show that Twitter is the most used social media networks by Saudis with 89% of respondents stating they have an account on Twitter. Both Instagram and Snapchat come next with 83% of respondents saying they use them. The third most used social network is YouTube with 68% stating they have an account on it. The least used social media accounts by Saudis are Pinterest followed by Google+ with 24% and 35% use it respectively.

### 7.9.2. The frequency of accessing the social media accounts by Saudi consumers

The most frequently accessed social media network in Saudi Arabia is Snapchat with 71% of respondents use it daily followed by Twitter with 65% stated accessing it daily, then Instagram with 60% daily access followed by YouTube with 54% access it daily. On the other hand, 65% of respondents indicated that they never access Pinterest whereas 60% said they never use Google+. The average usage was analysed for each social media account, and the five responses were coded as follows: 1= daily, 2= Weekly, 3= monthly, 4= less than once a month, 5= never.

We found that the average usage of Google+ by Saudi respondents is never (5), whereas the average usage of Facebook is less often than once a month (4). The average use of Twitter is daily (1). Similarly, the average access to Instagram is daily (1). When it comes to Pinterest, the average access to it is never (5) whereas for both YouTube and Snapchat the average access to them is daily (1). Finally, the average access to LinkedIn is less often than once a month (4).

### 7.9.3. The device used by most Saudis to connect to social media

98% of respondents said they use mobile phones to access social media while 56% access them via laptops. 22% reported using social media via tablets.

**7.9.4. The favourite social media network to communicate with companies in Saudi** Twitter is the preferred social media channel for consumers to communicate with companies according to 62% of respondent. Instagram comes second with 46% chose it as their favourite channel to interact with companies. 15% chose Snapchat. On the other hand, Pinterest is the least preferred channel to communicate with companies according to the Saudi respondents.

### 7.9.5. The most common type of interaction done by Saudi consumers on corporate social media channels

The most common actions consumers make on corporate social media accounts is to visit them, to like and follow them and to take advantage of offers displayed on social media accounts and to join a corporate social media account after seeing their advertisement on social media. 29% of respondents stated they visit them weekly whereas 22% said they do it less often than once a month and 20% do it about monthly. 29% of respondents said they like or follow corporate social media accounts less often than once a month whereas 21% said they do it weekly. Around 31% of respondents said they take advantage of offers displayed on corporate social media accounts less often than once a month while 19% stated they do it monthly. About 31% said they would join a corporate social media account after seeing their advertisement on social media

The least made actions by consumers on corporate social media accounts is to invite friends to join corporate social media accounts with 57% stating they never do it. Followed by taking part in a competition, promotion, prize draw on corporate social media accounts with 53% saying they never do it. Also using Direct Messaging (DM) on corporate social media accounts to

express appreciation or to complain is the third least performed action on corporate social media accounts with more than half the respondents saying they never do it.

The central tendency (average) was analysed for each action using SPSS to calculate the median since the type of data is ordinal. The Likert scale responses were coded as follows: Never = 1, Less often than once a month = 2, Monthly = 3, Weekly = 4, Daily = 5.

The results show that the most frequent action done by Saudi consumers on corporate social media accounts is action 2: visiting the corporate social media channels, with the median (3) which refers to doing the action monthly on average. On the other hand, the actions that consumers (never) do on an average are: Action 3: Invite friends to join corporate social media accounts, Action 11: Use direct messaging (DM) on corporate social media accounts to express appreciation/ gratitude and Action 15: Take part in a competition, promotion, prize draw on corporate social media accounts. These 3 activities showed a median of 1= (Never) to doing these actions. The rest of activities got an average of 2 which refers to doing the actions less often than once a month.

#### 7.9.6. Associations between social media used by respondents & demographics

A chi-square test of association test result showed that gender is significantly associated with using Facebook and Instagram, whereas the educational degree is associated with using Snapchat and LinkedIn. Monthly income is associated with using Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, whereas the city is associated with the usage of Facebook and YouTube. And finally, Age is associated with using Facebook and google+.

The data analysis and findings of research activity C survey were presented and discussed. We found that the consumers were positive when it comes to the usefulness, ease of use and attitude towards interacting with companies through corporate social media accounts whereas there were concerns when it comes to their privacy and trust while they interact with companies through social media. The results also revealed that Twitter is the favourite platform for the

users when communicating with companies whereas the most frequent action the users perform on corporate social media accounts is visiting these accounts.

The next chapter will discuss the findings of the current research which consists of three studies: Research activity A, B and C and will also present the conclusion, limitations and future works.

## Chapter 7 – Discussion

### 7. Introduction

This chapter will discuss the findings of the three studies conducted as part of answering the research questions. In chapter one, the research problem, objectives and research questions were formulated. The literature was reviewed in chapter 2 by exploring theories and existing studies related to the scope of the current research. The literature review was a crucial part as it contributed to creating the theoretical framework for the three studies. In chapter three, the methodology and the research process were discussed in detail including the development of the surveys which were used for the primary data collection. Chapter 4 discussed the data collection process and the analysis and findings of research activity A which established weights for the proposed social media maturity criteria. Chapter 5 discussed the data collection process and the data analysis and results of research activity B which assessed social media adoption and maturity in SMEs located in Saudi Arabia. Chapter 6 discussed the data collection and analysis of research activity C which investigated the readiness of the consumers of corporate social media accounts in Saudi Arabia. In this chapter, the findings and the answers to the research questions will be reviewed.

#### 7.1. Overview

The major problem inspiring the current research is the fact that studies related to social media marketing are sporadic and not connected in a way that can produce a practical means to support companies, especially the SME sector which typically faces challenges related to limited

resources, lack of skills and expertise and high competition. The current research aims to create a social media assessment model and tool that SMEs in Saudi Arabia can use to test their organisational maturity (success) in using social media. Such assessment is vital in helping these organisations understand the strengths and weaknesses related to their companies' use of social media. Such automated assessment will make it easier for them to identify the areas that need to be improved to progress and get value from social media. In order to be able to address the research problem we conducted research to investigate different aspects of social media adoption and maturity in SMEs focusing on one geographical location (Saudi Arabia) as it will help create an efficient and suitable assessment model for the needs of these businesses. Based on this philosophy, the research questions were formulated where each question addresses an aspect of corporate social media use. These aspects are related to social media maturity and adoption as well as consumers' readiness for corporate social media accounts in Saudi Arabia.

This research focused on SMEs located in Saudi Arabia. This is the first step towards addressing the research problem. By focusing on a country or region, it will enable to gain more consistent and accurate results especially towards studying the relationships and associations between different variables. Al-Somali *et al.*, (2011) stated that frameworks and models that are produced in a developed country might not be suitable for a developing country and vice versa. In this research, the primary data collected from one population will be used to explore further the relationships and associations between demographics, adoption and maturity factors as well as how consumers perceive the interaction with corporate social media accounts within this geographical location.

## 7.2. The development of the social media maturity model - Research activity A

The first research questions were:

**RQ1a:** Which criteria can be used for assessing SMEs' maturity in using social media in Saudi Arabia?

**RQ1b:** How can the maturity of using social media be calculated based on the criteria identified in this study?

To answer the first research question **RQ1a**, a literature review was conducted as a first step to identify and critically evaluate existing social media maturity models and progress levels. There are seven social media maturity criteria identified from the different existing models and used in the current research; these criteria include top management support, budget, strategy, policy, measurement, tools, and process. Also, based on these criteria there are 4 progress levels of maturity for each criterion. Level 1 is not mature whereas level 4 is advanced.

**RQ1b:** How can the maturity of using social media be calculated based on the criteria identified in this study?

Only the maturity model by Camiade and Claisse (2011) proposed a calculation method. We believed that this calculation does not produce an accurate representation of the overall maturity in companies as it relied only on the weakest score the company achieved to judge the overall maturity. As a result, we proposed our calculation method which relies on the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Sum of: (score achieved for each criterion} \times \text{each criterion weight)}}{\text{Total sum of all criteria weight}} = \text{The final maturity level (1/2/3/4)}$$

The score achieved for each criterion will be a number from 1 to 4 depending on the four maturity levels for each criterion. This calculation requires having a weight represented as a number to each maturity criterion. Consequently, to answer the second research question (RQ1b), the first study aimed at investigating if each maturity criterion has a different weight based on its importance to the overall success of using social media in marketing. A survey was



created to collect data from both social media experts and Saudi SMEs owners and managers by asking them to rate from 0 to 10 each criterion based on its importance (see appendix 2). A total of 102 responses were received from 47 social media experts and 55 SMEs owners and managers whose companies use social media. The data were then analysed using SPSS. The median was chosen - since the data is ordinal - as the measure of central tendency to determine the criteria weight. We found that the median was 7 to all the maturity criteria which do not reflect any variation in importance between these criteria and therefore we found that there is not enough justification based on these results to impose a weighing system to the proposed maturity calculation. The possible reason for this result could be:

- 1) The participants perceived the maturity criteria as equally important or at the same level of importance towards success in social media.
- 2) The rating method which was used to collect data regarding the weight focused mainly on the opinion of participants and how they perceive the importance of the criteria without any external measures.

Based on these findings, the decision was made to remove the weight part from the calculation and therefor the final calculation is modified as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Sum of: (score achieved for all criteria)}}{7 \text{ (the number of maturity criteria)}} = \text{The final maturity level (1/2/3/4)}$$

Also, the 47 social media experts who participated in the expert survey were asked to rate from 0 to 10 their agreement with each maturity level regarding its accuracy in reflecting the proposed level. The average then was calculated where the median was chosen as the mean for central tendency since the data type is ordinal. The results show that the median of all items rated by experts shows numbers from 5 and above out of 10 which reflects a reasonable overall agreement with the levels. However, since there is as a lack of similar studies in the literature

that aim to establish weight for the maturity criteria, it is therefore not possible at this stage to compare this result. This is an area that requires more investigation in future research.

### 7.3. Social media adoption & maturity in SMEs in Saudi Arabia - Research activity

#### B

The second aspect investigated was related to social media adoption and maturity in Saudi SMEs. The second research question was formulated as follows:

**RQ2a:** Which factors affect SMEs adoption of social media in Saudi Arabia?

**RQ2b:** What are the objectives of using social media by SMEs in Saudi Arabia?

**RQ2c:** What are the benefits Saudi SMEs gained from using SM?

**RQ2d:** What are the obstacles to using SM successfully in Saudi SMEs?

**RQ2e:** What are the barriers to social media adoption in SMEs in Saudi Arabia?

**RQ2f:** How mature are the SMEs in Saudi Arabia and what factors are associated with the maturity?

To answer these five questions, a survey was developed targeting SMEs located in Saudi Arabia. A total of 71 responses were received where 61 companies are considered social media users and ten companies are non-users. In the next section, the findings of the companies that use social media will be discussed followed by the results of the companies that do not use social media, then a discussion of the social media maturity findings.

### 7.4. Findings from SMEs using social media

Around 75% of participants are males whereas 25% are females. All female participants stated that their companies use social media, which might indicate that due to cultural aspects, female owners and managers could be more adopting to social media than male owners. However, due to the low number of female participants compared to males, we cannot prove this claim, and as a result, this could be subject to further investigation about gender association with social media adoption in SMEs in Saudi Arabia.

When it comes to the size of the companies, 46% of companies are small businesses, whereas 28% are micro-small companies and 26% are medium companies.

Nearly 66% of companies that use social media stated their companies own a website whereas 34% reported they do not have one. A chi-square test of association was conducted to test if there is an association between having a website and owning social media accounts and the results showed that there is a significant positive association.

#### 7.5. Years using social media and hours spent:

When asked how many hours their companies dedicate for social media per week, 62% stated they spend 1 to 20 hours per week (around 2 hours a day), whereas 34% spend 21 to 40 hours per week (approximately 5 hours a day). Only 2% stated they spend more than 40 hours per week and another 2% do not dedicate any time for social media.

#### 7.6. Social media accounts companies own and the most effective networks

Overall, the findings show that Twitter and Instagram are the most popular and used social media networks by these SMEs, then comes Facebook in the third place followed by Snapchat. The least used account is Pinterest, then LinkedIn. That makes Twitter, Instagram and Facebook the most popular social media networks for these companies.

It is noticeable that the least favourite social media network for these companies is Pinterest and LinkedIn. Around 7% stated they use other social media networks. These networks are Ali Baba, Akafi, Telegram, Behance, Trip advisor and Foursquare.

Regarding the most effective social media networks for these companies, it's Instagram followed by Twitter then Facebook. According to the same respondents the least useful social media network is Pinterest, LinkedIn then YouTube. About 3% mentioned other useful social media networks for their companies such as Alibaba, Akafi and Google AdWords.

### 7.7. The reasons why the SMEs adopted social media (Qualitative: Open-ended question)

The SMEs were asked an open-ended question about why their companies decided to adopt social media. A total of 61 companies answered the question. The answers were grouped based on the main themes (similarities) which are:

- To market and advertise their offerings,
- To increase the brand awareness.
- To reach the consumers.
- To engage with customers.
- To generate more leads /sales
- To get market insights.
- The ease of use of social media in marketing.
- For customer support.
- To take advantage of the instant interaction on social media.
- Because it is cost effective.
- To receive feedback.
- Keeping up with marketing trends.
- The effectiveness of social media.
- Improving search engine optimization.
- Follow the trend in using social media by competitors.
- Advanced audience targeting and to gain insight about clients' sentiments.
- Because they believe users search for products online.
- To recruit staff.

These responses were then aligned with objectives from the literature as seen in table 31. The aligned objectives from the literature that matches the themes of the participants' responses and which validates them are:

- Perceived usefulness of social media
- Creation of brand awareness
- Reach of target market
- Consumer engagement
- Leads generation
- Generation of advanced market insights
- Perceived ease of use
- Facilitate customer support
- Follow social media market trends
- Increase website awareness

### 7.8. Social media adoption factors among SMEs in Saudi Arabia

To answer the research question: **RQ2a**: What factors affect SMEs adoption of social media in Saudi Arabia?

A total of 61 companies answered 21 statements related to 10 adoption factors using 5 points Likert scale type. The aim was to investigate if the ten adoption factors identified in the literature affect the Saudi Arabian SMEs. The adoption factors include: perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, top management support, business goals, skills, resources, external competitive pressure, consumers' readiness, sector and infrastructure.

The 5 points Likert scale type options are: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. Because the majority of companies were positive towards the adoption statements, it was decided to group the strongly disagree, disagree and neutral in one category titled (not positive). The reason is that the number of companies that were disagreeing or strongly disagreeing was low compared to the positive items which would consequently make the statistical analysis and tests less accurate or significant. By grouping disagree, strongly disagree and neutral in one category titled (not positive) we can have a solid number of companies to conduct statistical analysis.

The data were analysed using SPSS. The 5 Likert scale items were coded as follows:

- 1= Not positive
- 2= Agree
- 3= Strongly agree.

According to Sullivan and Artino (2013) "Experts over the years have argued that the median should be used as the measure of central tendency for Likert scale data". The reliability analysis on the social media adoption factors comprising 21 items showed a high reliability, Cronbach's alpha  $\alpha = 0.90$ .

The statistical analysis on the ten adoption factors revealed that the median for all the adoption statements is either 2 (agree) or 3 (strongly agree) except for skills<sup>3</sup> which is about if the

company provides social media training to its employees, the median for that item was 1 (Not positive).

More statistics about the mode (the majority) were included to understand how the majority of the companies responded to the adoption statements, which can also give extra insight to the subject. The average responses to the adoption statements based on the mode were positive except in 3 statements that showed a mode of 1 = not positive, these statements are:

- **Skills 3:** My company provides social media training to its employees
- **Skills 4:** The owner/ top management has good knowledge in social media
- **Resources:** My company has the financial resources to adopt social media

These results revealed that the availability of financial resources, the knowledge of the owner in social media, and providing social media training to employees are three factors that the majority of these SMEs lack.

A Chi-square test of association was conducted between (skills 3) "providing social media training to employees" and demographical and adoption variables. The reason why we investigated further (Skills 3) is because it is the only statement that both median and mode showed a negative average response. The results showed that: Providing social media training (skills 3) is significantly associated with the following variables:

- Skills 4: Owner/manager has good knowledge of social media
- Resources: The availability of financial resources in the company
- Infrastructure: The availability of infrastructure for social media
- Perceived usefulness of social media by top management in the company
- Sector
- Competitive pressure
- Perceived ease of use

### 7.10. Objectives of using social media in Saudi SMEs

To answer the research question: **RQ2b:** What are the objectives of Saudi SMEs for using social media? The findings show that the most mentioned objectives were as follow:

- Reaching the target consumers
- Creating brand awareness
- To engage with consumers
- To facilitate support of customers
- To Generate leads
- To create exposure to the company's website

It is important to note that these results are noticeably consistent with the first open-ended question in the survey about why SMEs adopted social media which further validates the findings in this research.

### 7.11. The benefits SMEs gained from social media

To answer the research question **RQ2c:** What are the benefits Saudi SMEs gained from using social media? The three most reported benefits gained from using social media by the majority of the Saudi companies include: Increased exposure to the company, improved sales and increased number of loyal customers, respectively.

### 7.12. The obstacles towards using social media successfully in SMEs

To answer the research question: **RQ2d:** What are the obstacles to using SM successfully in Saudi SMEs?

The results showed that not having a dedicated team to work on social media, lack of time and skills are the three most reported obstacles that inhibit companies from using social media successfully. This is followed by companies' perception that that Saudi consumers are not ready to interact with brands on social media, not measure their social media performance, not having

an infrastructure for social media in their companies, lack of management support and lack of usefulness of social media to their business.

### 7.13. Associations between social media adoption factors and demographical and obstacles variables

A Chi-square test was performed to identify associations between the 10 social media adoption factors and demographical variables and the results showed that:

- Top management support in the company is significantly associated with the position of the respondent, the size of the company and (Not useful) as an obstacle to success in using social media.
- Business goals statement (The consistency of social media with the overall business goals of the company) is significantly associated with the position of the respondents, years using social media, perceived consumers non-readiness as an obstacle towards success in using social media.
- Perceived usefulness of social media is significantly associated with the age of the respondents, the educational degree, number of hours dedicated on social media per week and (Not useful) as an obstacle towards success in using social media.
- Infrastructure (the availability of stable internet connection, computers, and tools in the company) is statistically associated with having a website in the company and (lack of resources) as an obstacle towards using social media successfully.
- Skills 2 (There is a need for social media training in my company to improve the skills and knowledge of social media) is significantly associated with the number of hours dedicated for social media per week.
- The external competitive pressure in the company is significantly associated with the lack of time and lack of team as obstacles towards success.



#### 7.14. Chi-square test of association between having a website in the company and having social media accounts with demographic and adoption variables

A Chi-square test was also conducted to assess the association between having a website in the company with demographical variables and using social media. The significant associations found include:

- Having a website in the company is significantly associated with the location (city), and using social media accounts for corporate purposes, and more specifically using YouTube, Facebook and Google +.
- Having social media accounts in the company is significantly associated with having a website and the business activity of the company.
- Having a Pinterest account is significantly associated with the gender of respondents.
- Having a Twitter account is significantly associated with age, business activity of the company and the number of hours dedicated for social media per week.

#### 7.15. Chi-square test of association between the effective social media networks and demographic variables

The results of the chi-square test of association between the effective social media networks and demographical variables showed that:

- The effectiveness of YouTube is significantly associated with the business activity of the company, the number of years the company uses social media, the hours dedicated for social media per week and the age.
- The effectiveness of Instagram is significantly associated with the number of years the company uses social media.

### 7.16. Social media maturity in SMEs in Saudi Arabia findings

This section intends to answer the following research question: **RQ2f** How mature are the SMEs in Saudi Arabia and what are the variables associated with this maturity?

This question aims at investigating the maturity of Saudi Arabian SMEs in the way they use social media. We used the social media maturity model that was proposed in research activity A to assess the maturity of the SMEs and to examine the associations between the maturity stages of companies with other variables which will help in discovering more possible factors that could play a role in social media maturity.

The maturity assessment test consists of 7 multi-response questions related to the seven maturity criteria that were part of the proposed social media maturity model in the current research (see appendix 1). The maturity criteria include: Top management support, social media budget, social media strategy, social media policy, social media measurement, social media measurement tools and social media process. Each question has four responses that reflect four maturity levels related to that specific criterion. As proposed in the model, each of the four answers represents a level of maturity. Consequently, each response option was given the score that reflects the level of maturity from 1 to 4.

The calculation of the maturity was based on the calculation proposed in research activity A. After the companies take the test the sum of scores of all seven questions achieved by a specific company will be divided by seven which is the number of the maturity criteria. This calculation will help reach an overall maturity stage for that company based on the score it achieved in all seven criteria.

A total of 61 responses from companies located in Saudi Arabia took the social media maturity assessment test. A reliability analysis was carried out on the social media maturity test

comprising seven items using SPSS. Cronbach's alpha showed the items to reach acceptable reliability,  $\alpha = 0.86$ .

The results showed that the Saudi SMEs that participated in this study are least mature when it comes to the process criterion with a median and mode showing level 1 on an average. This result is consistent with the question about the obstacles of which the majority of companies reported not having a dedicated team to work on social media as an obstacle to success. In regard to budget and policy criteria, they achieved the second lowest scores, level 2 in median and level 1 in mode. On the other hand, the SMEs are somehow mature in the criterion top management support which has a median and mode both show level 3. In the rest of the criteria (strategy, measurement and measurement tools) the companies achieved level 2 in both median and mode on an average.

When looking at the results of the social media maturity test final calculation for these companies based on the maturity model proposed at an earlier stage, we can say 52% of the companies are considered level 2 in social media maturity which is considered not mature. 25% of the companies achieved level 3 which is somehow mature, whereas 18% of the companies achieved level 1 in social media maturity which is the least mature form of using social media. And finally, only 5% of the companies achieved level 4 which is the most mature stage of using social media according to our proposed maturity model.

Overall, we can say that the Saudi SMEs that participated in this study are considered level 2 on an average, based on the mean, median and mode results which all indicate level 2 as the average of their maturity, this level is considered not a mature form of using social media.

#### 7.17. Association between adoption, demographic variables and social media maturity

As part of investigating how other factors are associated with each maturity criterion and with the final maturity stages of companies, a Chi-square test of association was performed to answer

this research question. The results presented in table 63 demonstrate the statistically significant associations between different variables with each maturity criterion. These findings are one of the primary contributions of this research and which can be used in similar modes in future research. It is important to note that these associations do not imply or mean causation.

We can see from the results in table 63 that:

- Perceived usefulness of social media is significantly associated with the maturity criteria top management support, strategy, policy, and process.
- The consistency of social media with the overall business goals and vision is associated with the criteria top management support, strategy, and policy.
- Owner/ managers' good knowledge in social media is associated with the maturity criteria top management support.
- The availability of financial resources in the company is associated with the maturity criteria social media budget and strategy.
- Lack of resources as an obstacle towards using social media successfully in the company is associated with the maturity criteria social media budget.
- The availability of social media infrastructure in the company is associated with the maturity criteria budget, strategy, policy, and social media measurement tools.
- Having a LinkedIn account in the company is associated with the maturity criteria strategy and measurement tools.
- Top management support to adopt social media is associated with the maturity criteria social media strategy and policy.
- Providing social media training in the company is associated with the maturity criteria strategy, measurement, and process.
- Lack of social media infrastructure as an obstacle towards using social media successfully in the company is associated with the maturity criterion social media strategy.
- The number of hours spent on social media per week is associated with the maturity criteria social media measurement and measurement tools.
- Having excellent social media skills and knowledge in the company is associated with the maturity criteria social media strategy, measurement and measurement tools.
- The size of the company is associated with the maturity criteria measurement and measurement tools.
- The age of the owner/respondent is associated with the maturity criteria social media measurement and measurement tools.
- Having a YouTube account in the company is associated with the maturity criterion social media measurement tools.
- The type of business activity is associated with the maturity criterion social media measurement tools.

These results are significant and would make a solid base for more future research investigating organisational social media maturity.

When looking at table 64 which presents the Chi-square test association results between the calculated overall social media maturity stages of companies and other variables, and which present one of the main contributions of the current research. We can see that the overall social media maturity stage of the company is significantly associated with the following variables:

- Number of hours dedicated to social media per week
- Having a LinkedIn account
- Perceived usefulness of social media by the owner
- Top management support to social media in the company
- The consistency of social media with the business goals and vision of the company
- Providing social media training in the company
- The availability of financial resources in the company
- The availability of social media infrastructure in the company

It is clear that the above results are consistent with the results in research question **RQ2d: What are the obstacles to using SM successfully in Saudi SMEs?** The majority of responses for that question reported having issues with lack of time, lack of team dedicated to working on social media and lack of skills. Therefore, we argue that hours spent on social media, providing social media training, availability of infrastructure, resources, consistency of the business goals with social media and perceived usefulness of social media must be added to the initial maturity assessment model as criteria for measuring the overall maturity.

#### 7.18. Findings from companies that are non-users of social media

In the survey that investigates social media adoption and maturity in SMEs in Saudi Arabia, 10 companies out of 71 SMEs said they do not have social media accounts. As part of answering the research question: **RQ2e** What are the barriers to social media adoption in SMEs in Saudi Arabia? These companies were asked questions related to 3 areas: 1) Why they do not use social

media in their business, 2) are they planning to use social media in the future and 3) if yes, why are they planning to use social media.

The ten companies non-users of social media were asked to explain the reasons for not using social media in an open-ended question. The answers varied as follows:

- *"None."*
- *"It is not useful."*
- *"Lawyers are not allowed to advertise according to the law."*
- *"Lack of knowledge in social media."*
- *"Lack of specialised experts in this field."*
- *"We deal directly with clients."*
- *"Lack of need for marketing in the company."*
- *"The type of products targets a specific segment and require visiting the client and present directly to them."*
- *"Did not think of it."*

These responses fall into three categories of factors that were already identified from the literature; which are:

- Perceived usefulness of social media
- Lack of knowledge, skills, and expertise in social media
- The type of business activity and sector

The respondents then were further asked the same question, but in a different format using multiple responses for respondents to choose from, the question was: which of the following factors is a reason for your company not to adopt social media? The answers were:

- They don't think that social media is useful for their businesses
- The perception that Saudi consumers are not ready to interact with companies through social media.
- Lack of time
- Lack of a dedicated team to work on social media
- Lack of required infrastructure for social media

These results validate 3 of the social media obstacles that the companies stated earlier in this research which are: perceived usefulness, lack of knowledge and expertise and lack of time.

These findings also validate the adoption factors: the availability of infrastructure, the perceived usefulness of social media and the perceived consumers' readiness.

4 out of the 10 companies stated they plan to use social media in the future whereas 5 companies said they don't know if they will use social media in the future and only 1 SMEs stated that it is not planning to use social media in the future.

The four companies that said they plan to use social media were asked why they are planning to in an open-ended question. The responses were as follows:

- *"It is the fastest way to marketing."*
- *"It became the easiest and the most popular."*
- *"It is the common trend nowadays."*
- *"To connect clients to international conferences and keep them up to date with tech."*

From the four responses, we can see that the reasons were related to the perceived usefulness of social media: *"It is the fastest way to marketing"*, Perceived ease of use: *"It became the easiest and the most popular"*. Similarly, some were related to external competition and sector: *"It is the common trend nowadays"*. Also, one was related to supporting the customers: *"To connect clients to international conferences and keep them up to date with tech"*. Therefore, we can conclude that perceived usefulness and ease of use of social media, external competition, sector and supporting the customer are the main reasons why these companies want to adopt social media.

### **7.19. Consumers' social media readiness for corporate social media accounts survey**

This survey is the subject of research activity C which was conducted with a total of 363 social media users in Saudi Arabia to answer the following research question:

**RQ3:** How ready are the consumers to use social media corporate accounts in Saudi Arabia?

#### 7.19.1. The social media networks mostly used by social media users in Saudi Arabia

The results show that Twitter is the most used social media networks by Saudis followed by Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube respectively. The least used social media accounts by Saudis are Pinterest followed by Google+.

#### 7.19.2. The frequency of accessing the social media accounts by Saudi consumers

The most frequently accessed social media network in Saudi Arabia is Snapchat with 71% of respondents use it daily followed by Twitter with 65% stated accessing it daily, then Instagram with 60% daily access followed by YouTube with 54% access it daily. On the other hand, the least accessed network is Pinterest and Google+. The average usage was analysed for each social media account, and the five responses were coded as follows: 1= daily, 2= Weekly, 3= monthly, 4= less than once a month, 5= never.

We found that the average usage of Google+ by Saudi respondents is never (5), whereas the average usage of Facebook is less often than once a month (4). The average use of Twitter is daily (1). Similarly, the average access to Instagram is daily (1). When it comes to Pinterest, the average access to it is never (5) whereas for both YouTube and Snapchat the average access to them is daily (1). Finally, the average access to LinkedIn is less often than once a month (4).

#### 7.19.3. The device used by most Saudis to connect to social media

98% of respondents said they use mobile phones to access social media while 56% access them via laptops. 22% reported using social media via tablets.

#### 7.19.4. The favourite social media network to communicate with companies in Saudi

Twitter is the preferred social media channel for consumers to communicate with companies followed by Instagram then Snapchat. On the other hand, Pinterest is the least preferred channel to communicate with companies according to the respondents.



#### 7.19.5. The most common type of interaction done by Saudi consumers on corporate social media channels

The most common actions consumers make on corporate social media accounts is to visit them, to like and follow them and to take advantage of offers displayed on social media accounts and to join a corporate social media account after seeing their advertisement on social media. 29% of respondents stated they visit them weekly whereas 22% said they do it less often than once a month and 20% do it about monthly. 29% of respondents said they like or follow corporate social media accounts less often than once a month whereas 21% said they do it weekly. Around 31% of respondents said they take advantage of offers displayed on corporate social media accounts less often than once a month while 19% stated they do it monthly. About 31% said they would join a corporate social media account after seeing their advertisement on social media

The least made actions by consumers on corporate social media accounts is to invite friends to join corporate social media accounts with 57% stating they never do it. Followed by taking part in a competition, promotion, prize draw on corporate social media accounts with 53% saying they never do it. Also using Direct Messaging (DM) on corporate social media accounts to express appreciation or to complain is the third least performed action on corporate social media accounts with more than half the respondents saying they never do it.

The central tendency (average) was analysed for each action using SPSS to calculate the median since the type of data is ordinal. The Likert scale responses were coded as follows: Never = 1, Less often than once a month = 2, Monthly = 3, Weekly = 4, Daily = 5.

The results show that the most frequent action done by Saudi consumers on corporate social media accounts is action 2: visiting the corporate social media channels, with the median (3) which refers to doing the action monthly on average. On the other hand, the actions that consumers (never) do on an average are: Action 3: Invite friends to join corporate social media accounts, Action 11: Use direct messaging (DM) on corporate social media accounts to express

appreciation/ gratitude and Action 15: Take part in a competition, promotion, prize draw on corporate social media accounts. These 3 activities showed a median of 1= (Never) to doing these actions. The rest of activities got an average of 2 which refers to doing the actions less often than once a month.

#### 7.19.6. Associations between social media used by respondents & demographics

A chi-square test of association test result showed that gender is significantly associated with using Facebook and Instagram, whereas the educational degree is associated with using Snapchat and LinkedIn. Monthly income is associated with using Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, whereas the city is associated with the usage of Facebook and YouTube. And finally, Age is associated with using Facebook and google+.

#### 7.19.7. Measuring Saudi consumers social media readiness for corporate social media accounts

Based on a theoretical framework consisting of 4 components which are:

1. Perceived usefulness of corporate social media accounts as a platform to communicate with companies
2. Perceived ease of use of corporate social media accounts as a platform to communicate with companies
3. Saudi consumers attitude to using social media to communicate with companies
4. Trust and privacy of Saudi consumers towards corporate social media account

The findings show that the consumers were positive regarding the usefulness corporate of social media accounts, the ease of use of corporate social media accounts and their attitude towards using corporate social media accounts as the statistical average response based on the median to all the statements related to these 3 variables showed number 3= Accept.

When it comes to Trust and privacy variable, the Saudi consumers have concerns regarding their trust and privacy while they use corporate social media accounts. The average response based on the median for the 8 statements related to the perceived trust and privacy according to the Saudi consumers is as follows:

| <b>Trust &amp; privacy statements</b>   | <b>Average response (median)</b> |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Trust_1- I consider it safe to give out personal information on social media.   | 1 = Reject                       |
| Trust_2- I worry that the information I send through corporate social media accounts can be seen by the wrong people. | 3 = Accept                       |
| Trust_3- I have trust/confidence in the information I read on corporate social media accounts.                        | 2 = Neutral                      |
| Trust_4- It is easy to tell whether brands are behaving dishonestly or unethically on social media.                   | 2 = Neutral                      |
| Trust_5- It is difficult to trust brands on social media.   | 2 = Neutral                      |
| Trust_6- I am likely to boycott a brand if I discovered it was operating unethically on social media.                 | 3 = Accept                       |
| Trust_7- I am afraid that I will have regrets later on about information I share through social media.                | 3 = Accept                       |
| Trust_8- I think carefully about what I write in social media to be sure I can stand for it in retrospect.            | 3 = Accept                       |

## 8. Conclusions and future work

The first step in the current research was to develop an organisational social media maturity model for SMEs and a formula to calculate this maturity based on seven criteria and four levels as seen in appendix 1. These criteria are: Top management support, budget, strategy, policy, measurement, measurement tools and finally process. The final calculation formula is:

|   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| Sum of: (score achieved for each criterion × each criterion weight) | = the final maturity level (1/2/3/4) |
| Total sum of all criteria weight                                    |                                      |

This maturity model was part of a survey that investigated social media adoption, maturity, benefits and obstacles to using social media in SMEs (research activity B) which received 71 responses from SMEs located in Saudi Arabia.

The findings show that the reasons cited by the SMEs for why they adopted social media include: Reaching target consumers, usefulness of social media marketing, brand awareness creation, consumer engagement and to generate leads. The most used social media networks by SMEs that participated in this study are Twitter, Instagram, Facebook then Snapchat respectively, whereas the least used is Pinterest. It is also noticeable that using LinkedIn is among the least used social media accounts by these companies. The most effective accounts according to Saudi SMEs are Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook respectively. The most common objective for using social media by these companies is to reach target consumers and then to create brand awareness. The most common benefits companies gained from using social media were the increased exposure to their companies and improved sales. As far as the main obstacles these companies face when working on social media include the lack of dedicated team working on their social media accounts followed by the lack of time, skills and resources respectively.

In regards to the adoption of social media in the Saudi SMEs that participated in this study, it is obvious that there is high awareness of the usefulness of social media as a marketing channel as well as high support from the owners and/ or top management as they believe that social media can achieve some of their business goals. However, the majority think that there is a need for training in using social media in their companies which is something that they did not typically provide when they were asked. We investigated further which factors are associated with not offering training when they agree that they need it using chi-square test of association. The results revealed that the availability of financial resources in the company, the availability of social media infrastructure, the knowledge of the owner/ manager of social media, the competitive pressure in their sector as well as the perceived usefulness of social media are all significantly associated with not providing training in SMEs. They also agreed that competition with other companies is a factor in their adoption of social media and that the majority of companies in their sector are using social media.

Significant associations between different variables were discovered in this study using Chi-square test, and the results were presented in tables 35, 36 and 37 in this thesis. It is important to clarify that these associations do not mean (causation). The most significant associations discovered are:

- Having a website in the company and the lack of resources are both associated with the availability of social media infrastructure.
- Age, educational degree, and size of company are associated with the perceived usefulness of social media.
- Using Pinterest in these companies is associated with the gender of the respondent.
- The effectiveness of YouTube as a channel (according to the companies) is associated with the number of hours dedicated to social media per week, the number of years using

social media, the type of business activity, and age. Whereas the effectiveness of Instagram is associated with number of years using social media in the company

When it comes to the 10 companies that do not use social media, the reasons cited by the respondents for why they do not use social media revolved around the following three themes:

- Lack of Perceived usefulness
- Type of business (sector) does not require or need social media marketing
- Lack of knowledge, skills, and expertise in social media.

In regards to the social media maturity test that was developed earlier in this research and which was part of the survey that collected data from SMEs in Saudi Arabia, the results show that the companies were considered mature when it comes to the criteria top management support achieving level 3 out of 4 on average. As far as the criteria (budget, strategy, policy, measurement, measurement tools) companies scored level 2 out of 4 on average. The companies achieved level 1 out of 4 in the criteria process which is considered not advanced. When applying the proposed overall maturity calculation, the findings indicate that the companies were considered level 2 in social media maturity on average. This makes "process" one of the weak points that affect the maturity of SMEs in using social media. This result is consistent with the findings of the social media obstacles question where the majority of companies stated that the lack of dedicated social media team is one of the obstacles towards success in using social media.

An essential part of the current research was to examine the associations between different factors within the company to identify new maturity criteria. The chi-square test of association was used between social media maturity data and adoption factors as well as demographics and obstacles. The results were displayed in tables 51 and 52 of this thesis. The results showed that there is a significant association between the overall maturity stages of companies (the final calculated score) and the following variables:

- Number of hours dedicated for social media per week.
- Having a LinkedIn account.
- Perceived usefulness of social media.
- The consistency of the business goals with social media.
- Providing social media training to employees in the company.
- The availability of financial resources.
- The availability of social media infrastructure (internet, computers, tools, etc.).

Also, the significant associations between each maturity criterion and the adoption, demographical and obstacles variables which were presented in table 51 could be a base to more studies in the future as it provides extra insights into the maturity criteria and their associated variables within companies. That is also one of the current research contributions.

In addition to the social media adoption and maturity survey, this research investigated the consumers' readiness for corporate social media accounts in Saudi Arabia (Research activity C). The findings show that the most used social media networks by social media users in Saudi Arabia are Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat respectively. On the other hand, the least used network by Saudi users is Pinterest. The Saudi consumers use Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat and YouTube daily on average, they use Facebook and LinkedIn less often than once a month and almost never access Pinterest and Google+ on an average. The majority of users access social media via their smartphones. The most common action consumers do on corporate social media accounts is to visit them.

The Saudi consumers were positive when it comes to their perceived usefulness of corporate social media accounts as a communication tool with companies; they were also positive towards their perceived ease of use of social media as a tool to interact with companies. Similarly, they demonstrated a positive attitude and willingness towards using social media to communicate with companies. However, they had concerns regarding their trust and privacy of

using social media as a communication channel with brands. On average, they disagreed with the statement: I consider it safe to give out personal information on social media. While they generally "Agreed" with the following statements:

- I worry that information I send through corporate social media accounts can be seen by the wrong people.
- I am likely to boycott a brand if I discovered it was operating unethically on social media.
- I am afraid that I will have regrets later on about information I share through social media.
- I think carefully about what I write on social media to be sure I can stand for it in retrospect.

And they were "Neutral" on average to the following statements:

- I have trust/confidence in the information I read on corporate social media accounts.
- It is easy to tell whether brands are behaving dishonestly or unethically on social media.
- It is difficult to trust brands on social media.

## 9. Research Limitations

The only limitations faced were related to Research Activity B. the study was conducted with 71 SMEs located in Saudi Arabia. This sample is not representative of the whole population of SMEs in Saudi Arabia. Thus, the results obtained from these companies are not and should not be generalised to the entire population of SMEs. However, even though the sample was relatively small, it was enough to conduct statistical analysis such as the chi-square test of association which produced statistically significant results that were part of the contributions of the current research; also, the reliability of the survey was high. Nevertheless, it is suggested that more investigation with a larger sample size to be carried out in the future and to compare the results with the findings in the current research.



Another limitation was the low response rate to the same survey even though the survey was translated into Arabic by the researcher and a professional translator. A possible reason for that is the informal and undefined structure of SMEs and their typical characteristics such as their lack of time and staff; as usually the owner is also the manager and possibly has more roles in the business.

## 10. Future work

Based on the findings of the current research, the future research steps should follow the following directions:

### **Research direction 1 – Reflecting on the conceptual model**

To creating a regression model that involves the following social media maturity criteria: Top management support, budget, strategy, policy, measurement, measurement tools, process, hours spent on social media, social media training, availability of resources and the availability of infrastructure and to test their associations with the social media performance of companies. This performance includes metrics such as the number of social media accounts owned by companies, number of followers on social media, number of posts on social media, type of content shared on social media, the rate of engagement, reach and the paid advertising on social media.

The next objective is to study the associations and relationships of these variables to understand further the associations between the organisational maturity criteria identified in the current research and the actual performance on social media. This will help develop the model further and will help produce a better guidance for SMEs in the future.

### **Research direction 2 – Evaluating the maturity assessment tool**

To evaluate the online maturity assessment tool which includes the final maturity model proposed in this study as well as the maturity calculation formula in terms of usability, ease of use and usefulness with SMEs in Saudi Arabia. The evaluation of the tool will also include

retesting the associations between the overall maturity stage of companies and the 6 discovered criteria: Availability of infrastructure, resources, providing training, hours dedicated for social media, having LinkedIn account, perceived usefulness and the consistency of the overall business goals with social media.

### **Research direction 3 – Reviewing the weighing calculations for the conceptual model**

To establish a weight for the proposed maturity criteria as the results in research activity A showed no variations in the average number of the rated criteria. This could be done by using different research approaches from the one used in this study. One suggested method could include an external measure, not only the perceived importance. The external measure may include analytics from companies' social media networks and metrics such as engagement, number of followers and likes, reach and other trackable metrics that can reflect actual performance data and create a regression model or a correlation test.

Another method to establish criteria weight could be to ask companies and experts to priorities the maturity criteria based on their importance by assigning a unique number to each criterion and the results to be compared with the findings in this study.

### **Proposed study method**

The next study is continuity to the current research which started with research activity A, B and C. It aims to:

- 1) Investigate the associations between the social media maturity criteria with the actual performance on the social media accounts (through a regression test)
- 2) Confirm the association between the final maturity stage of companies and the 6 identified maturity criteria (infrastructure, providing social media training, availability of financial resources, perceived usefulness of social media, the consistency of social media with the business goals, having a LinkedIn account).

- 3) Test the social media assessment online tool in terms of its usability, perceived ease of use and usefulness, attitude and behavioural intention.

### Evolution of the conceptual model

The conceptual framework of the research activity D involves 4 main parts:

- Demographics
- Social media details of the company
- Details about the 6 identified new criteria
- Using the online assessment tool and answer the evaluation survey

Figure 35 presents the conceptual framework of the proposed future study. A detailed plan for implementing the future work is included in Appendix 8.

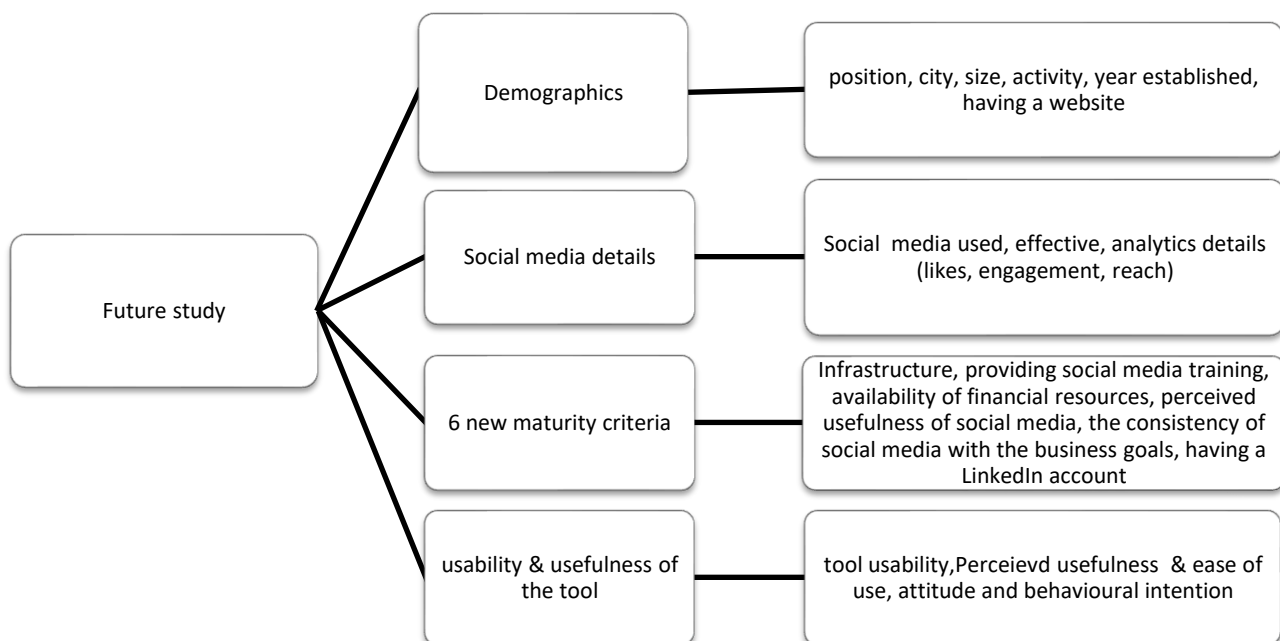


Figure 74 Conceptual framework of the future study

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1 – The proposed social media maturity test

**Question 1:** When it comes to the top management/owner support for social media marketing in your company, which of these options better reflects the current situation in your company:

- Social media marketing in my company has no support from top management/owner; it has only the individual support of the employee who works on it.
- Social media marketing in my company has the support of mid-management only (example: the marketing manager).
- Social media marketing in my company has the support of top management (the director/owner).
- My company is social media oriented. Social media is an essential part of the company's identity.

**Question 2:** When it comes to the social media budget in your company, which of these options better reflects the current situation in your company:

- There is no financial budget spent on social media.
- There is random insignificant budget spent on social media.
- There is adequate but unstable budget spent on social media.
- There is a dedicated, specific and stable budget for social media in my company.

**Question 3:** When it comes to the social media strategy in your company, which of these options better reflects the current situation in your company:

- There are no clear or specific objectives/strategy in managing social media in my company.
- There are some operational objectives & tactics for social media in my company.
- There is a clear social media strategy with specific objectives in my company.
- There is a clear social media strategy that is integrated with the overall marketing strategy and the vision of the company.

**Question 4:** When it comes to the social media policy in your company, which of these options better reflects the current situation in your company:

- There is no policy for social media use in my company.
- There is no policy for using social media but it is clear that there is a need for one.
- There is a generic policy recently created.
- There is a social media policy that covers the internal and external use of social media.

**Question 5:** When it comes to the social media measurement in your company, which of these options better reflects the current situation in your company:

- We do not measure social media activities on our accounts.
- We track raw data (number of followers, comments, likes, etc.).
- KPI measurement (associating each social media objective to a set of metrics).
- We use dashboards (advanced measurement)

**Question 6:** When it comes to using social media measurement tools in your company, which of these options better reflects the current situation in your company:

- There are no tools used for measurement.
- Tracking basic social media alerts available on our social media accounts.
- Using free social media listening and analysing tools.
- Using paid sophisticated measurement tools, 360 multi-channel tools for collecting & analysing data, reporting and evaluation

**Question 7:** When it comes to the process of managing social media in your company, which of these options better reflects the current situation in your company:

- Only an individual is involved in managing the company's social media presence, no specific process or involvement from any department in the company.
- Only a group of people is involved in managing social media in the company, there is no involvement from other department in the company.
- There is cooperation in social media processes and management between some divisions in the company.
- Social media is integrated into the overall company's process. All departments are involved.

.....End of test.....

## Appendix 2: The survey of research activity (A) - (criteria weight)

Dear respondent,

My name is Basmah Alotaibi, and I am a Ph.D. researcher in the School of Science & Technology at Middlesex University in London. My research examines social media adoption and maturity factors and criteria among small & medium companies in Saudi Arabia. The following survey is part of my research. It intends to collect information about the extent of which you agree on the proposed criteria and levels related to social media marketing maturity in small and medium businesses. You should give your opinion about the proposed criteria and levels based on your experience and knowledge in social media marketing.

We propose seven criteria to evaluate the success of using social media in marketing in small & medium companies. These criteria are: 1) Top management support to social media, 2) Social media budget 3) Social media strategy 4) Social media policy 5) Social media measurement 6) Social media tools 7) Social media process.

For each criterion, we propose four statements that reflect four levels of maturity: Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, and Level 4.

In the first question, you will be asked to rate the above social media criteria according to how important each one of them to a successful and mature use of social media marketing for small & medium businesses based on your knowledge and experience in social media. Then, you will be asked to rate the extent to which you agree with the statements presented under each maturity criteria that reflect four levels of maturity. The survey may take 10 to 15 minutes to be completed. I greatly appreciate your participation, and I would like to assure you that your responses will be treated confidentially and solely for the academic purposes.

Thank you.

### Consent form

1. Please read the following consent form before you start the survey: <https://goo.gl/t76OsT> by clicking "Yes" you agree to participate in this study.

### Profile

2. What is your current working title?
3. Which city do you currently work in?
4. How long have you been working in the field of digital marketing and social media?

## Maturity criteria rating

5. In the context of small and medium companies, On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 being not at all important and 10 being extremely important, rate the following social media factors according to how important each one of them is to a mature & successful use of social media. Answer based on your experience and knowledge.

|  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| Top management support to the social media use in the company  | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Budget dedicated for social media campaigns & adverts and training   | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Strategy for using social media based on clear objectives and tactics  | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Policy that outlines the guidelines for how to use social media for employees and consumers and risk management                                    | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Measurement which includes Regular monitoring, analysing and reporting on social media activities to track & evaluate the social media performance | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Using social media tools for monitoring, tracking and analysing data   | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Process which includes having different departments involved and cooperating in the social media management and execution.                         | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |

## Management commitment

6. In the context of small & medium companies, the following statements reflect 4 levels of social media progress related to the factor "TOP MANAGEMENT SUPPORT TO SOCIAL MEDIA". On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 being I strongly disagree with the level that the statement reflects and 10 being I strongly agree with the level the statement reflects, rate these statements according to the extent to which you agree with the level they reflect. Level 1 = not advanced, level 4 the most advanced.

|  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| Level 1: When using social media in the company has no support from top management, it has only the individual support of the employee who works on it | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Level 2: When using social media in the company has the support of mid-management only (example: the marketing manager).                               | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Level 3: When using social media in the company has the support of top management (the director/owner)   | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Level 4: When the company is social media oriented. Social media is an essential part of the company   | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |

## Social media budget

7. In the context of small & medium companies, the following statements reflect 4 levels of social media progress related to the factor "BUDGET". On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 being I strongly disagree and 10 being I strongly agree, rate these statements according to the extent to which you agree with the level they reflect. Level 1 = not advanced, level 4 the most advanced.

|   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| Level 1: When there is no budget dedicated to social media. | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Level 2: When there is random insignificant budget          | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Level 3: When there is dedicated adequate budget            | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Level 4: When there is dedicated specific and secure budget | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |

### Social media strategy

8. In the context of small & medium companies, the following statements reflect 4 levels of social media progress related to the factor "STRATEGY". On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 being I strongly disagree and 10 being I strongly agree, rate these statements according to the extent to which you agree with the level they reflect. Level 1 = not advanced, level 4 the most advanced.

|   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| Level 1: When there are no specific objectives/strategy for managing social media                           | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Level 2: When there are some operational objectives & tactics   | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Level 3: When there is a clear social media strategy with specific objectives                               | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Level 4: When there is a clear social media strategy that is integrated with the overall marketing strategy | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |

### Social media policy

9. In the context of small & medium companies, the following statements reflect 4 levels of social media progress related to the factor "POLICY". On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 being I strongly disagree and 10 being I strongly agree, rate these statements according to the extent to which you agree with the level they reflect. Level 1 = not advanced, level 4 the most advanced.

|  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| Level 1: When there is no policy for social media use  | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Level 2: When there is no policy for using social media but it is clear that there is the need for one | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Level 3: When there is generic policy recently created   | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Level 4: When there is a social media policy that covers the internal and external use of social media | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |

### Social media measurement

10. In the context of small & medium companies, the following statements reflect 4 levels of social media progress related to the factor "MEASUREMENT". On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 being I strongly disagree and 10 being I strongly agree, rate these statements according to the extent to which you agree with the level they reflect. Level 1 = not advanced, level 4 the most advanced.

|   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| Level 1: When there is no measurement of the social media performance                     | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Level 2: When there is tracking to raw data only (number of followers, comments, etc.)    | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Level 3: When there is KPI measurement (associating each objective with a set of metrics) | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Level 4: When there is dashboard measurement (advanced measurement)                       | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |

## Social media tools

11. In the context of small & medium companies, the following statements reflect 4 levels of social media progress related to the factor "TOOLS". On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 being I strongly disagree and 10 being I strongly agree, rate these statements according to the extent to which you agree with the level they reflect. Level 1 = not advanced, level 4 the most advanced.

|   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| Level 1: When there are no tools used for measurement   | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Level 2: When tracking basic social media alerts available on our social media accounts   | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Level 3: When using free social media listening and analysing tools   | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Level 4: When using paid sophisticated measurement tools, 360 multi-channel tools for collecting & analysing data, reporting and evaluation | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |

## Social media process

In the context of small & medium companies, the following statements reflect 4 levels of social media progress related to the factor "PROCESS". On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 being I strongly disagree and 10 being I strongly agree, rate these statements according to the extent to which you agree with the level they reflect. Level 1 = not advanced, level 4 the most advanced. \*

|  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| Level 1: When there is no specific process, only an individual is involved in managing the social media    | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Level 2: When there is only a group involved in managing and delivering social media                       | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Level 3: When there is cooperation in social media processes between different divisions in the company    | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Level 4: When social media is integrated into the overall company's process. All departments are involved. | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |

.....End of survey.....

## Appendix 3: Survey of research activity (B) – English version

Dear respondent,

My name is Basmah Alotaibi, and I am a Ph.D. researcher at the School of Science & Technology of Middlesex University in London. My research examines social media adoption and maturity among small & medium companies in Saudi Arabia. The following survey is part of my research. It intends to collect information about what factors affect the adoption of social media by small & medium enterprises in Saudi Arabia, the obstacles as well as the benefits of using these web technologies. This survey is intended for small & medium companies in Saudi Arabia (any company with 1 to 250 employees) and should be filled in by the owner, marketing managers, social media managers or anyone in the marketing department of the company. I greatly appreciate your participation, and I would like to assure you that your responses will be treated, confidentially and solely for academic purposes. Please answer all questions and record the time it took you to complete the survey. You will be asked about your feedback regarding the clarity of the questions at the end of the survey.

Thank you and best wishes.

### Consent form

Please read the following consent form before you start the survey: <https://goo.gl/SL6Ot2> by pressing "Yes", you agree to participate in this study.

### Demographics

1. My company is located in

- ☐ Riyadh
- ☐ Dammam
- ☐ Jeddah
- ☐ Khobar
- ☐ Other:.....

2. My position in the company is:

- ☐ Owner
- ☐ Marketing manager
- ☐ Business manager
- ☐ Marketing executive
- ☐ Employee in the marketing department
- ☐ Social media manager
- ☐ Other:

3. I am:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female



4. My age is:

- ☐ Less than 18 years
- ☐ 18-24
- ☐ 25-34
- ☐ 35-44
- ☐ 45-54
- ☐ 55-64
- ☐ More than 64

5. What is the highest degree you received?

- ☐ High school or less
- ☐ Certificate
- ☐ Diploma
- ☐ Bachelor's degree
- ☐ Master degree
- ☐ Ph.D
- ☐ Other:.....

6. What is the total number of employees in your company?

- ☐ 1 to 5 employees
- ☐ From 6 to 49 employees
- ☐ From 50 to 249 employees
- ☐ More than 249 employees

7. What is the industry that your company belongs to?

- ☐ Manufacturing
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Government
- ☐ Finance
- ☐ Wholesale Retail
- ☐ Healthcare
- ☐ Construction
- ☐ Transportation
- ☐ Insurance
- ☐ Hotels & hospitality
- ☐ Other: .....

8. When was your company established? .....

9. Does your company have a website?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

10. Does your company have social media accounts?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No      *Skip to question 28*

11. Why did your company adopt social media? (Cite all the reasons) .....

12. How many years your company has been using social media? .....

13. How many hours does your company dedicate for social media per week?

- ☐ 0 hours
- ☐ 1 to 20 hours
- ☐ 21 to 40 hours
- ☐ More than 40 hours

14. Which of the following social media channels does your company currently have an account on? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Google+
- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ Twitter
- ☐ Instagram
- ☐ Pinterest
- ☐ YouTube
- ☐ Snapchat
- ☐ LinkedIn
- ☐ Other.....

15. Which of the following social media network(s) is/are the most effective for your company? (in terms of engagement, reach and number followers)

- ☐ Google+
- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ Twitter
- ☐ Instagram
- ☐ Pinterest
- ☐ YouTube
- ☐ Snapchat
- ☐ LinkedIn
- ☐ Other:.....

16. Rate to what extent do you agree with the following statements: (your answers should be based on the actual current situation in your company)

| Adoption statements   | Strongly agree | Agree | neutral | disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 1- I believe that using social media would improve my business performance                    |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 2- I believe that using social media would enhance my company's marketing effectiveness       |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 3- I find social media useful for my business   |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 4- I find social media easy to use in marketing   |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 5- Top management in my company is interested in adopting social media                        |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 6- Top management in my company (or the owner) strongly supports the adoption of social media |                |       |         |          |                   |

|   |  |  |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| 7- Top management in my company (or the owner) is involved in the social media process                                      |  |  |  |  |  |
| 8- Social media is consistent with the core business goals of my company  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9- Social media can help achieve some of my company's business goals  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10- The team working on social media in my company has excellent skills and knowledge in using social media                 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 11- There is a need for social media training in my company to improve the skills and knowledge of social media             |  |  |  |  |  |
| 12- My company provides social media training to its employees  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 13- The owner/ top management has a good knowledge in social media  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 14- My company has the financial resources to adopt social media  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 15- Competition with other companies in my sector is a factor in my company's decision to adopt social media                |  |  |  |  |  |
| 16- There is a pressure on my company to adopt social media to stay competitive in the market                               |  |  |  |  |  |
| 17- Many of our competitors use social media  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 18- I believe that primary and /or secondary segments of our targeted consumers are social media users                      |  |  |  |  |  |
| 19- Reaching the consumers who are social media users is a factor in my company's decision to adopt social media            |  |  |  |  |  |
| 20- I believe that the majority of the companies that belong to the same sector as my company use social media in marketing |  |  |  |  |  |
| 21- My company has the required technological infrastructure (computers, internet, tools) to adopt social media             |  |  |  |  |  |

17. Based on your experience in social media marketing, on a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 being not at all important and 10 being extremely important, rate the following factors according to their importance to a successful use in social media marketing. (Please slide to the right to see all the numbers)

|  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| Top management support to the social media use in the company  | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Budget dedicated for social media campaigns & adverts and training   | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Strategy for using social media based on clear objectives and tactics  | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Policy that outlines guidelines for how to use social media for employees and consumers and risk management                          | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Measurement that includes regular monitoring, analysing and reporting on social media activities to track & evaluate the performance | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |

|   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| Using social media tools for monitoring, tracking and analysing data  | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Process to have different departments involved and cooperating in the social media management and execution | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |

### Maturity test

18. When it comes to the top management support for social media marketing in your company, which of these options better reflects the current situation in your company:

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Social media marketing in my company has no support from top management; it has only the individual support of the employee who works on it
- ☐ Social media marketing in my company has the support of mid-management only (the marketing manager).
- ☐ Social media marketing in my company has the support of top management (the director/owner)
- ☐ My company is social media oriented. Social media is an essential part of the company's identity.

19. When it comes to the social media budget in your company, which of these options better reflects the current situation in your company:

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ There is no budget dedicated to social media.
- ☐ There is random insignificant budget
- ☐ There is a dedicated adequate budget
- ☐ There is a dedicated, specific and stable budget

20. When it comes to the social media strategy in your company, which of these options better reflects the current situation in your company:

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ There is no clear social media strategy or specific objectives
- ☐ There are some operational objectives & tactics
- ☐ There is a clear social media strategy with specific objectives
- ☐ There is a clear social media strategy that is integrated with the overall marketing strategy of the company

21. When it comes to the social media policy in your company, which of these options better reflects the current situation in your company:

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ There is no policy for social media use in my company
- ☐ There is no policy for using social media but it is clear that there is a need for one
- ☐ There is a generic policy recently created
- ☐ There is a social media policy that covers the internal and external use of social media

22. When it comes to the social media measurement in your company, which of these options better reflects the current situation in your company:

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ We do not measure social media activities on our accounts
- ☐ We track raw data (number of followers, comments, likes, etc.)
- ☐ KPI measurement (associating each social media objective with a set of metrics)
- ☐ We use dashboards (advanced measurement)

23. When it comes to using social media measurement tools in your company, which of these options better reflects the current situation in your company:

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ There are no tools used for measurement
- ☐ Tracking basic social media alerts available on our social media accounts
- ☐ Using free social media listening and analysing tools
- ☐ Using paid sophisticated measurement tools, 360 multi-channel tools for collecting & analysing data, reporting and evaluation

24. When it comes to the process of managing and delivering social media in your company, which of these options better reflects the current situation in your company:

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Only an individual is involved in managing the social media, no specific process
- ☐ Only a group is involved in managing social media in the company
- ☐ There is cooperation in social media processes between different divisions in the company
- ☐ Social media is integrated within the overall company's process. All departments are involved

:

25. What are the objectives that your company tries to achieve by using social media?

*Tick all that apply.*

- ☐ We do not follow any specific objectives
- ☐ To reach our target consumers
- ☐ To create brand awareness
- ☐ To engage with consumers
- ☐ To create exposure to the company's main website
- ☐ To facilitate support of customers
- ☐ To generate leads
- ☐ Other:.....

26. What are the benefits that your company gained by using social media?

*Tick all that apply.*

- ☐ Increased exposure to the company
- ☐ Increased traffic to the website
- ☐ Developed loyal customers
- ☐ Provided the company with marketplace insights
- ☐ Generated leads
- ☐ Improved the company's ranking in the search engine
- ☐ Social media helped in growing business partnership

- Improved sales
- Reduced marketing expenses
- Other:.....

27. Which of these factors do you consider an obstacle to using social media (SUCCESSFULLY) in your company?

*Tick all that apply.*

- Lack of time
- No technological infrastructure that supports social media in the company
- Lack of skills and knowledge in using social media
- No dedicated team to work on social media
- Saudi consumers are not ready
- Lack of resources/budget to spend on social media activities
- Lack of support by the top management/owner towards using social media
- Social media is not useful for my business
- Our competitors do not use social media
- No clear strategy to follow (no clear objectives or regular content posting)
- No measurement of the social media activities and efforts
- Other:.....

28. Why is your company not using social media in marketing? .....

29. Which of these factors is a reason for not adopting social media in your company?

*Tick all that apply.*

- There is lack of time
- There is no technological infrastructure for social media in the company
- There is a lack of skills and knowledge in using social media
- There is no team to work on social media
- Saudi consumers not ready
- No resources/ budget to spend on social media activities
- Top management/owner does not support adopting social media in the company
- Social media is not useful for my business
- Our competitors do not use social media
- Other:.....

30. Does your company plan to adopt social media in the future?

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes, *Skip to question 31*
- No
- Can't decide

31. Why is your company considering adopting social media? .....

.....End of survey.....

## Appendix 4- Survey of Research activity B – Arabic version

### استبيان: تبني واستخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي بين الشركات الصغيرة والمتوسطة في المملكة العربية السعودية ومدى النضج في استخدامها

اسمي بسمة العتيبي, باحثة دكتوراه في قسم العلوم والتكنولوجيا التابع لجامعة ميدلسكس في لندن – بريطانيا. يدرس بحثي أسباب تبني واستخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي بين الشركات الصغيرة والمتوسطة في المملكة العربية السعودية ومدى النضج في استخدامها والعوائق التي تحد من تبنيها. يتطلب هذا البحث جمع بيانات حول استخدام الشركات الصغيرة والمتوسطة لشبكات التواصل الاجتماعي في التسويق في المملكة العربية السعودية

أقدر كثيرا مشاركتكم وأود أن أؤكد لكم أن إجاباتكم ستعامل بسرية تامة ولأغراض أكاديمية فقط. الرجاء الإجابة على جميع الأسئلة.

شكرا

#### نموذج الموافقة

يرجى قراءة نموذج الموافقة التالي قبل البدء بتعبئة الاستبيان: <https://goo.gl/YGHq6y> بالنقر على "نعم" اوافق على المشاركة في هذه الدراسة

#### بيانات الشركة

##### 1. تقع شركتي في:

- ☐ الرياض
- ☐ الدمام
- ☐ جدة
- ☐ الخبر
- ☐ أخرى:

##### 2. مناصبي في الشركة:

- ☐ المالك
- ☐ مدير أعمال
- ☐ موظف في قسم التسويق
- ☐ مدير قسم التسويق عبر شبكات التواصل الاجتماعي
- ☐ أخرى .....

##### 3. الجنس:

- ☐ ذكر
- ☐ أنثى

##### 4. العمر:

- ☐ أقل من 18 سنة
- ☐ من 18 الى 24
- ☐ 25 الى 34
- ☐ 35 الى 44
- ☐ 45 الى 54
- ☐ 55 الى 64
- ☐ أكثر من 64

##### 5. أعلى درجة تعليمية حصلت عليها:

- ☐ الثانوية أو أقل
- ☐ شهادات
- ☐ معهد
- ☐ بكالوريوس

- ماجستير
- دكتوراه
- أخرى .....
- 6. ماهو عدد الموظفين في شركتك؟
  - 1 الى 5
  - 6 الى 49
  - 50 الى 249
  - أكثر من 249
- 7. ماهو المجال التجاري لشركتك؟ .....
- 8. متى انشئت شركتك؟ .....
- 9. هل تمتلك شركتك موقع الكتروني على الانترنت؟
  - نعم
  - لا
- 10. هل تمتلك شركتك حسابات عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي؟
  - نعم
  - لا . (انتقل للسؤال 28)
- 11. لماذا قررت شركتك فتح حسابات لها عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي؟ أذكر جميع الأسباب
- 12. كم عدد سنوات استخدام شركتك لوسائل التواصل الاجتماعي؟
- 13. ماهو عدد الساعات التي تخصصها شركتك لشبكات التواصل الاجتماعي اسبوعيا
  - لا تخصص اي وقت
  - 1 الى 20
  - 21 الى 40
  - أكثر من 40 ساعة
- 14. أي من وسائل التواصل الإجتماعي التالية تمتلك شركتك حسابات عليها ؟ (أختر أكثر من خيار اذا لزم)
  - قوقل بلس
  - فيسبوك
  - تويتر
  - انستقرام
  - بينترست
  - يوتيوب
  - سناب تشات
  - لينكدان
  - أخرى .....
- 15. أي من شبكات وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي التالية هي الأكثر فعالية لشركتك؟ (من حيث التفاعل وعدد المتابعين الخ)
  - قوقل بلس
  - فيسبوك
  - تويتر
  - انستقرام
  - بينترست
  - يوتيوب
  - سناب تشات
  - لينكدان
  - أخرى .....



16. مامدى موافقتك على العبارات التالية؟ ( اجاباتك يجب ان تكون مبنية على ما يحدث واقعيا في شركتك وليس ماتظن انه صحيح)

|  |            |       |       |          |               |
|--|------------|-------|-------|----------|---------------|
| أرى أن استعمال وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي يحسن من أداء شركتي  | أوافق بشدة | أوافق | محايد | لا أوافق | لا أوافق أبدا |
| أرى أن استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي يساعد على التعزيز من فعالية التسويق في شركتي  |            |       |       |          |               |
| أجد أن وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي مفيدة لشركتي  |            |       |       |          |               |
| أرى أن وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي سهلة الاستخدام في مجال التسويق  |            |       |       |          |               |
| الإدارة العليا في الشركة التي أعمل بها مهتمة بتبني وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي   |            |       |       |          |               |
| الإدارة العليا في شركتي تدعم بشدة استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في التسويق   |            |       |       |          |               |
| لإدارة العليا في الشركة التي أعمل بها (أو المالك) تشرف على عملية إدارة وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي                                     |            |       |       |          |               |
| استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في شركتي متسق مع الاهداف التجارية الأساسية للشركة  |            |       |       |          |               |
| يمكن لوسائل التواصل الاجتماعي أن تساعد على تحقيق بعض من أهداف الشركة التجارية  |            |       |       |          |               |
| من يتولى العمل على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في الشركة التي أعمل بها لديه مهارات ومعرفة ممتازة باستخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي      |            |       |       |          |               |
| هناك حاجة لتوفير تدريب لتحسين مهارات استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في الشركة التي أعمل بها                                       |            |       |       |          |               |
| تقدم الشركة تدريب خاص لموظفيها لتحسين مهاراتهم في استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في التسويق                                       |            |       |       |          |               |
| المالك / الإدارة العليا في شركتي لديها معرفة جيدة في التسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي   |            |       |       |          |               |
| المنافسة مع الشركات المنتمية لنفس قطاع شركتي التجاري كانت عاملا في قرار الشركة بتبني وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في التسويق            |            |       |       |          |               |
| هناك ضغط على الشركة التي أعمل بها لتبني وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي لتظل قادرة على المنافسة في السوق                                   |            |       |       |          |               |
| العديد من الشركات المنافسة لشركتنا تستخدم وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في التسويق   |            |       |       |          |               |
| أعتقد أن جزء كبير من المستهلكين المستهدفين من قبل الشركة التي أعمل بها هم مستخدمين لوسائل التواصل الاجتماعي                        |            |       |       |          |               |
| الرغبة في الوصول إلى المستهلكين ممن يستخدمون وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي كان عاملا في قرار شركتي استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي       |            |       |       |          |               |
| أرى أن الغالبية العظمى من الشركات التي تنتمي إلى نفس قطاع شركتي التجاري تستخدم وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في التسويق                  |            |       |       |          |               |
| أرى أن الغالبية العظمى من الشركات التي تنتمي إلى نفس قطاع شركتي التجاري تستخدم وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في التسويق                  |            |       |       |          |               |
| شركتي لديها البنية التحتية التكنولوجية اللازمة (أجهزة الكمبيوتر، الإنترنت.. الخ) لتبني واستخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في التسويق |            |       |       |          |               |

17. قيم العوامل التالية (بناء على رأيك الشخصي) حسب أهميتها للاستخدام الناجح لوسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في التسويق. على مقياس 0 = غير مهم على الإطلاق و 10 = في غاية الأهمية \* ، من 0 إلى 10

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | دعم الإدارة العليا للشركة لتبني وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي  |
| 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | ميزانية مالية مخصصة لوسائل (budget) التواصل الاجتماعي الخاصة بالشركة (للاعلانات المدفوعة على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي، أو تصميم جرافيك، والتدريب الخ)         |
| 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | وضع استراتيجية لاستخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي مبنية على أسس وأهداف وتكتيكات واضحة (strategy)   |
| 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | وضع سياسة استخدام وإرشادات فيما يتعلق باستخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي خاصة بالموظفين والمستهلكين ومحتوية على استراتيجية لإدارة المخاطر (policy)             |
| 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | القياس الدوري لأداء الشركة على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي عبر مراقبة الحسابات وتحليل البيانات لانشطة الشركة على السوشال ميديا لتتبع وتقييم الاداء (measurement) |
| 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | استخدام أدوات وبرامج قياس أداء حسابات وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي الخاصة بالشركة لرصد وتتبع وتحليل البيانات  |
| 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | عملية إدارة وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي يتعاون مختلف الإدارات وأقسام الشركة (Process)  |

### أختبار مدى النضج في اس في استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في الشركات

18. فيما يتعلق بدعم الإدارة العليا في شركتك للتسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي، أي من هذه الخيارات يعكس الوضع الحالي في الشركة :

- في شركتي ليس هناك أي دعم أو تشجيع من الإدارة العليا للتسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي . هناك فقط دعم فردي من قبل الموظف الذي يعمل عليها
  - في شركتي هناك دعم وتشجيع للتسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي من قبل مدير التسويق فقط وليس الإدارة العليا
  - في شركتي هناك دعم وتشجيع لاستخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في التسويق من قبل لإدارة العليا (مدير / مالك)
  - تعتمد شركتي على التسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي وتعتبره جزء أساسي من هوية الشركة
19. فيما يتعلق ب (الميزانية المالية) في شركتك للتسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي، أي من هذه الخيارات يعكس الوضع الحالي في الشركة :

- ليس هناك ميزانية مخصصة لوسائل التواصل الاجتماعي
  - هناك ميزانية ضئيلة عشوائية وغير ثابتة
  - هناك ميزانية كافية ولكن غير ثابتة
  - هناك ميزانية ثابتة ومخصصة للتسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي
20. فيما يتعلق ب (الاستراتيجية) المتعلقة بالتسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في شركتك، أي من هذه الخيارات يعكس الوضع الحالي في الشركة :

- لا توجد أهداف محددة ولا استراتيجية في إدارة وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في شركتي
- هناك بعض الأهداف التشغيلية والتكتيكات
- هناك استراتيجية خاصة بإدارة وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي مبنية على أهداف محددة
- هناك استراتيجية مرسومة وواضحة لإدارة وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي للشركة وهي جزء لا يتجزأ من استراتيجية التسويق الشاملة للشركة

- 21. فيما يتعلق بسياسة الاستخدام المتعلقة بالتسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في شركتك (policy) ، أي من هذه الخيارات يعكس الوضع الحالي في الشركة:**
- لا توجد سياسة استخدام لوسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في الشركة التي أعمل بها
  - لا توجد سياسة استخدام لوسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في شركتي ولكن من الواضح أن هناك حاجة لوضع واحدة
  - هناك سياسة استخدام عامة تم وضعها مؤخرًا
  - هناك سياسة استخدام لوسائل التواصل الاجتماعي تغطي سياسات استخدام الداخلي (الموظفين) والخارجي (المستهلكين) لوسائل التواصل الاجتماعي
- 22. فيما يتعلق ب (قياس الاداء) المتعلقة بالتسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في شركتك (measurement)، أي من هذه الخيارات يعكس الوضع الحالي في الشركة**
- ليس هناك أي نوع من أنواع قياس أداء حسابات التواصل الاجتماعي الخاصة بالشركة
  - (في شركتي هناك تتبع للبيانات الخام \الجاهزة فقط (مثلا عدد من المتابعين، عدد الإعجاب)
  - في شركتي يتم قياس مؤشرات الأداء الرئيسية - KPIs - (ربط كل هدف لما يتم القيام به عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي بمجموعة من المقاييس لمعرفة إذا ما تم تحقيقه)
  - في شركتي هناك قياس أداء متقدم ودقيق باستخدام dashboards
- 23. فيما يتعلق ب (الادوات المستخدمة لقياس الاداء) (measurement tools) ، المتعلقة بالتسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في شركتك / أي من هذه الخيارات يعكس الوضع الحالي في الشركة\***
- في شركتي لا يتم استخدام أي من ادوات تتبع وقياس الاداء
  - في شركتي يتم تتبع التنبيهات الأساسية الموجودة على حسابات وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي الخاصة بالشركة
  - في شركتي يتم استخدام ادوات مراقبة وتحليل بيانات متقدمة ولكن مجانية (social media measurement tools) مثل listening and sentiment
  - في شركتي يتم استخدام أدوات قياس أداء متطورة ومدفوعة، أدوات مراقبة 360 متعددة القنوات لجمع وتحليل البيانات وإعداد التقارير والتقييم
- 24. فيما يتعلق ب (عملية إدارة شبكات التواصل الاجتماعي المتعلقة بالتسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في شركتك، (Process / أي من هذه الخيارات يعكس الوضع الحالي في الشركة\* :**
- في شركتي هناك موظف واحد فقط مسؤول عن إدارة وتنفيذ شبكات التواصل الاجتماعي الخاصة بالشركة. ليس هناك مشاركة من أقسام أو أشخاص آخرين
  - في شركتي هناك مجموعة معينة فقط هي من يشارك في إدارة شبكات التواصل الاجتماعي الخاصة بالشركة
  - هناك تعاون في عمليات إدارة شبكات التواصل الاجتماعي بين الأقسام المختلفة في الشركة
  - في شركتي تشارك وتتعاون جميع الإدارات وأقسام الشركة في عملية إدارة شبكات التواصل الاجتماعي الخاصة بالشركة
- أهداف , فوائد وعوائق استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في الشركات**
- 25. ما هي الأهداف التي تحاول شركتك تحقيقها من خلال استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي؟**
- لا تتبع شركتي أي أهداف
  - الوصول إلى المستهلكين الذين تستهدفهم شركتنا
  - خلق الوعي بالعلامة التجارية الخاصة بشركتنا
  - التواصل والتفاعل مع المستهلكين
  - زيادة التعريف والزيارات للموقع الإلكتروني للشركة
  - لتسهيل دعم العملاء
  - To generate leads
  - أخرى .....
- 26. ماهي الفوائد العائدة على شركتك من استخدامها لوسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في التسويق؟**
- زيادة المعرفة بالشركة
  - زيادة اعداد الزيارات الى الموقع الالكتروني للشركة
  - زيادة اعداد العملاء الاوفياء
  - قدمت للشركة وسيلة للتعرف على السوق بشكل اكبر
  - حسنت معدل ظهور الشركة على محركات البحث
  - ساعدت الشركة على خلق فرص شراكة تجارية

- حسنت من ارقام المبيعات
- ساعدت على تقليص تكاليف التسويق للشركة
- generated leads
- أخرى.....

27. أي من هذه العوامل تعتبره عائقاً نحو استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي بشكل ناجح وفعال في شركتك؟ (يمكنك اختيار أكثر من خيار)

- قلة الوقت
- عدم توفر البنية التحتية اللازمة لاستخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي
- الافتقار إلى المهارات والمعرفة الكافية في استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي للتسويق
- عدم وجود فريق مخصص للعمل على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي
- عدم وعي واستعداد المستهلك السعودي للتفاعل مع الشركات عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي
- قلة الموارد / الميزانية المالية للشركة للإنفاق على أنشطة وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي
- عدم وجود دعم وحماس من قبل الإدارة العليا / أو المالك نحو استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في التسويق
- لا أعتقد أن التسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي مفيد لشركتي
- عدم استخدام الشركات المنافسة لشركتنا وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي (عدم وجود منافسة)
- عدم وجود استراتيجية واضحة للتسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في شركتنا
- عدم قياس شركتنا لادائها عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي
- أخرى .....

الشركات الغير مستخدمة لوسائل التواصل الاجتماعي

28. ماهو سبب عدم استخدام شركتك لوسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في التسويق؟

29. أي من هذه العوامل هو سبب لعدم استخدام شركتك لوسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في التسويق؟

- قلة الوقت
- عدم توفر البنية التحتية اللازمة لاستخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي
- الافتقار إلى المهارات والمعرفة الكافية في استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي للتسويق
- عدم وجود فريق مخصص للعمل على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي
- عدم وعي واستعداد المستهلك السعودي للتفاعل مع الشركات عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي
- قلة الموارد / الميزانية المالية للشركة للإنفاق على أنشطة وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي
- عدم وجود دعم وحماس من قبل الإدارة العليا / أو المالك نحو تبني وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في التسويق
- لا أعتقد أن التسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي مفيد لشركتنا
- عدم استخدام الشركات المنافسة لشركتنا وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي
- عدم وجود منافسة في استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي للتسويق

30. هل تنوي شركتك استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في التسويق؟

- نعم (اذهب لسؤال 31)
- لا
- لا أعلم

31. لماذا تنوي شركتك تبني واستخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في التسويق؟ .....

..... End of survey.....

## Appendix 5 – Survey of research activity C – English Version

### Consumers' social media readiness in Saudi Arabia (survey)

Dear respondent,

My name is Basmah Alotaibi, and I am a Ph.D. researcher in the School of Science & Technology at Middlesex University in London. My research examines social media adoption and maturity among Small & Medium Enterprises in Saudi Arabia. The following survey is part of my research. It intends to collect information about how individuals interact with corporate social media accounts. I greatly appreciate your participation, and I would like to assure you that your responses will be treated confidentially and solely for the academic purposes.

Please note the following:

1. Social media does not include emails; it includes only social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest, YouTube, etc.
2. "Corporate social media accounts" means the social media pages that belong to brands and businesses.
3. "Interacting with corporate social media accounts" refers to all kind of activities you perform on social media pages that belong to brands and businesses.

Please answer all questions. Thank you and best wishes.

### Consent form

Please read the following consent form before you start the survey: <https://goo.gl/INSgcQ> by clicking "Yes" you agree to participate in this study.

### Demographics

1. I am:

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male

2. My age is:

- ☐ Less than 18
- ☐ 18-24
- ☐ 25-34
- ☐ 35-44
- ☐ 45-54
- ☐ 55-64
- ☐ More than 64

3. The highest educational degree I obtained is:

- ☐ High school or less
- ☐ Certificate
- ☐ Diploma
- ☐ Bachelor's degree
- ☐ Master's degree
- ☐ PhD
- ☐ Other:

4. My Income per month is:

- ☐ Less than 4,000 SAR
- ☐ Between 4,000 to 8,000 SAR
- ☐ Between 8,001 to 15,000 SAR
- ☐ Between 15,001 to 25,000 SAR
- ☐ More than 25,000 SAR

5. The city I live in is:

- ☐ Riyadh
- ☐ Khobar
- ☐ Dammam
- ☐ Jeddah
- ☐ Other:.....

### Users` preferences

6. Which of the following social media channels do you currently have an account on?

(Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Google+
- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ Twitter
- ☐ Instagram
- ☐ Pinterest
- ☐ YouTube
- ☐ Snapchat
- ☐ LinkedIn
- ☐ Other:.....

7. Based on your answers to Question 6, please rank the social media channels you have an account on according to how often you use them:

|           | Daily | Weekly | Monthly | Less often than once a month | Never |
|-----------|-------|--------|---------|------------------------------|-------|
| Google+   |       |        |         |                              |       |
| Facebook  |       |        |         |                              |       |
| Twitter   |       |        |         |                              |       |
| Instagram |       |        |         |                              |       |
| Pinterest |       |        |         |                              |       |
| YouTube   |       |        |         |                              |       |
| Snapchat  |       |        |         |                              |       |
| LinkedIn  |       |        |         |                              |       |

8. Which device(s) do you use to connect with social media (tick ALL the ones you use)

- ☐ Desktop computer
- ☐ Laptop
- ☐ Tablet
- ☐ Mobile phone
- ☐ Game console
- ☐ Internet enabled TV
- ☐ Hand held music player
- ☐ E-reader
- ☐ Other:.....

9. Which one from the following devices do you use the most of the time to connect with social media?  
(Please tick only one)

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Desktop computer
- ☐ Laptop
- ☐ Tablet
- ☐ Mobile phone
- ☐ Game console
- ☐ Internet enabled TV
- ☐ Hand held music player
- ☐ E-reader
- ☐ Other:.....

### Type of interaction with corporate social media accounts

10. How often do you perform the following actions through corporate social media accounts?

| Activities   | Daily | Weekly | Monthly | Less often than once a month | Never |
|--|-------|--------|---------|------------------------------|-------|
| 1- Join corporate social media account (ex: to like Facebook pages, follow twitter account, subscribe to YouTube channel etc.) |       |        |         |                              |       |
| 2- Visit corporate social media accounts   |       |        |         |                              |       |
| 3- Invite friends to join corporate social media accounts  |       |        |         |                              |       |
| 4- Mention a brand/organisation in a post, status update, or a tweet   |       |        |         |                              |       |
| 5- Interact with corporate social media accounts (interaction includes: reply, like, comment, share, retweet, favourite, etc.) |       |        |         |                              |       |
| 6- Use a public post on corporate social media account to ask for additional information about product/service                 |       |        |         |                              |       |
| 7- Use a public post on corporate social media accounts to   |       |        |         |                              |       |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| complain/negatively comment about product/service  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 8- Use public posts on corporate social media accounts to express appreciation/gratitude for a product or service          |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9- Use direct messaging (DM) on corporate social media accounts to request additional information about a product/service  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10- Use direct messaging (DM) on corporate social media accounts to complain/negatively comment about a product or service |  |  |  |  |  |
| 11- Use direct messaging (DM) on corporate social media accounts to express appreciation/ gratitude                        |  |  |  |  |  |
| 12- Recommend a product or service by tagging your friends in posts by corporate social media accounts                     |  |  |  |  |  |
| 13- Purchase products/service directly through corporate social media accounts   |  |  |  |  |  |
| 14- Take advantage of offers displayed on corporate social media accounts  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 15- Take part in a competition, promotion, prize draw on corporate social media accounts                                   |  |  |  |  |  |
| 16- Click on advertisements displayed on social media by brands you follow   |  |  |  |  |  |
| 17- Click on advertisements displayed on social media by brands you DO NOT follow on social media                          |  |  |  |  |  |
| 18- Join a corporate social media account after seeing their advertisement on social media                                 |  |  |  |  |  |

11. Which of the following social media channels is your favourite platform to communicate with companies?

*Tick all that apply.*

- ☐ Google+
- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ Twitter
- ☐ Instagram
- ☐ Pinterest
- ☐ YouTube
- ☐ Snapchat
- ☐ LinkedIn
- ☐ Other:.....



## Perceived usefulness

12. Rate to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

| Statements   | Strongly agree | agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|--|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 1. Social media is a good channel to learn about products and services I am interested in                        |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 2. Social media is a good channel to voice my satisfaction or dissatisfaction with a product, service or company |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 3. Social media enables my voice to be heard by companies  |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 4. Social media is a good channel for dialogue with companies  |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 5. Social media is just another channel for companies to burden me with advertising                              |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 6. Most companies do not have sufficient knowledge about how social media should be used                         |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 7. In general, I believe that the interaction with companies in social media can be useful for me as a consumer  |                |       |         |          |                   |

## Perceived Ease of use

13. Rate to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

| Statements   | Strongly agree | agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|--|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 1. Interacting with companies through social media seems more convenient than through other communication channels |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 2. Interacting with companies through social media seems faster than through other communication channels          |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 3. Interacting with companies through social media seems more informal than through other communication channels   |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 4. I find it easier to communicate with companies through social media than through other communication channels   |                |       |         |          |                   |

## Attitude towards corporate social media accounts

14. Rate to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

| Statements   | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|--|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 1. I would like to communicate with companies that I am interested in through social media |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 2. It is likely that I will use social media to communicate with companies                 |                |       |         |          |                   |

|   |  |  |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| 3. Overall, my attitude towards interaction with companies through social media is positive |  |  |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|

## Trust & privacy

15- Rate to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

| Statements   | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|--|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 1. I consider it safe to give out personal information on social media                                     |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 2. I worry that information I send through corporate social media accounts can be seen by the wrong people |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 3. I have trust/confidence in the information I read on corporate social media accounts                    |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 4. It is easy to tell whether brands are behaving dishonestly or unethically on social media               |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 5. It is difficult to trust brands on social media   |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 6. I am likely to boycott a brand if I discovered it was operating unethically on social media             |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 7. I am afraid that I will have regrets later on about information I share through social media today      |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 8. I think carefully about what I write on social media to be sure I can stand for it in retrospect        |                |       |         |          |                   |

..... End of survey.....

## Appendix 6 - Survey of research activity C – Arabic Version

### إستبيان: تقبل المستهلكين لحسابات وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي الخاصة بالشركات في المملكة العربية السعودية

اسمي بسمه العتيبي وأنا باحثة دكتوراه في قسم العلوم والتكنولوجيا التابع لجامعة ميدلسكس في لندن - بريطانيا.

يدرس بحثي أسباب تبني واستخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي بين الشركات الصغيرة والمتوسطة في المملكة العربية السعودية ومدى النضج في استخدامها والعوائق التي تحد من تبنيها. يتطلب هذا البحث جمع بيانات حول تفاعل المستهلك في المملكة العربية السعودية مع حسابات شبكات التواصل الاجتماعي الخاصة بالشركات.

أقدر كثيرا مشاركتكم وأود أن أؤكد لكم أن إجاباتكم ستعامل بسرية تامة ولأغراض أكاديمية فقط. الرجاء الإجابة على جميع الأسئلة.

يرجى ملاحظة أن وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي لا تشمل البريد الإلكتروني. وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي تشمل فقط شبكات كفيسبوك، تويتر، لنكدان و سناب تشات، يوتيوب... الخ.

شكرا

#### 1- الجنس:

☐ ذكر ☐ أنثى

#### 2- العمر:

أقل من 18 ☐ من 19 الى 24 عام ☐ من 25 الى 34 عام ☐ من 35 الى 54 عام ☐ من 55 الى 64 عام ☐ أكثر من 64 عام

#### 3- أعلى درجة تعليمية حصلت عليها:

☐ الثانوية أو أقل ☐ شهادات ☐ معهد ☐ بكالوريوس ☐ ماجستير ☐ دكتوراه ☐ أخرى (أذكرها).....

#### 4- الدخل الشهري:

☐ أقل من 4000 ريال ☐ بين 4000 و 8000 ريال ☐ بين 8001 و 15000 ريال ☐ بين 15001 و 25000 ريال ☐ أكثر من 25000 ريال

#### 5- في اي مدينة تسكن:

☐ الرياض ☐ الدمام ☐ جدة ☐ الخبر ☐ أخرى (اذكرها).....

#### 6- أي من وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي التالية تملك حساب من خلالها حاليًا؟ (أختر أكثر من خيار اذا لزم)

☐ قوقل بلس ☐ فيسبوك ☐ تويتر ☐ انستقرام ☐ بينترست ☐ يوتيوب ☐ سناب تشات ☐ لينكد إن ☐ أخرى (اذكرها)

#### 7- بناء على إجاباتك على السؤال 5، قم بتقييم مدى استخدامك لوسائل التواصل الاجتماعي التالية:

|          | يوميًا                | أسبوعيا               | شهريا                 | أقل من مرة واحدة في الشهر | لا أستخدمها أبدا      |
|----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| قوقل بلس | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>     | <input type="radio"/> |
| فيسبوك   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>     | <input type="radio"/> |

|                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |               |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | تويتر         |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | انستغرام      |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | بينترست       |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | سناپ تشات     |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | يوتيوب        |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | لنكدان        |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | أخرى (أذكرها) |
|                       |                       |                       |                       |                       | .....         |

### 8- أي من الأجهزة التالية تستخدم حين تتصل عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي (اختر جميع الأجهزة التي تستعملها):

☐ كمبيوتر مكتبي (دسك توب) ☐ كمبيوتر محمول (لابتوب) ☐ كمبيوتر لوحي (تابليت) ☐ جهاز الجوال ☐ جهاز تشغيل ألعاب ☐ تلفزيون ذكي ☐ أخرى (أذكرها).....

### 9- اختر الجهاز الأكثر استخداما بالنسبة لك حين تتصل عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي (يرجى اختيار خيار واحد فقط):

☐ كمبيوتر مكتبي (دسك توب) ☐ كمبيوتر محمول (لابتوب) ☐ كمبيوتر لوحي (تابليت) ☐ جهاز الجوال ☐ جهاز تشغيل ألعاب ☐ تلفزيون ذكي ☐ أخرى (أذكرها).....

### 10- عندما تتواصل مع الشركات عبر حساباتها في وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي، ما مدى تكرارك للنشاطات التالية:

| لا أقوم بذلك على الإطلاق | أقل من مرة واحدة في الشهر | شهريا                 | أسبوعيا               | يوميا                 |  |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/>    | <input type="radio"/>     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 1- الإنضمام الى صفحات وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي الخاصة بالشركات كمتابع (مثال: لايك، فولو، الخ)   |
| <input type="radio"/>    | <input type="radio"/>     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 2- زيارة صفحات خاصة بالشركات على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي   |
| <input type="radio"/>    | <input type="radio"/>     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 3- دعوة الأصدقاء للانضمام إلى إحدى صفحات وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي الخاصة بإحدى الشركات  |
| <input type="radio"/>    | <input type="radio"/>     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 4- ذكر (منشن) لإحدى الشركات أو المؤسسات التجارية عبر أحد حساباتك على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي (تغريدة، تحديث حالة، صورة الخ..)            |
| <input type="radio"/>    | <input type="radio"/>     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 5- التفاعل مع الشركات عبر حسابات وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي الخاصة بها (التفاعل يشمل: الرد، التعليق، الإعجاب، إعادة التغريدة، التفضيل، الخ) |
| <input type="radio"/>    | <input type="radio"/>     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 6- إستخدام محتوى أحد حسابات التواصل الاجتماعي الخاصة بالشركات أو المؤسسات لتطلب معلومات اضافيه حول منتج او خدمة (كتعليق، رد، الخ)        |
| <input type="radio"/>    | <input type="radio"/>     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 7- إستخدام ما تعرضه الشركات من محتوى على حساباتها في مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي لنشكتي أو لتعبر عن رأيك بشكل سلبي فيما يتعلق بمنتج او خدمة  |
| <input type="radio"/>    | <input type="radio"/>     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 8- إستخدام ما تعرضه الشركات من محتوى على حساباتها في مواقع   |

|                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |   |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|
|                       |                       |                       |                       |                       | التواصل الاجتماعي لتعبير عن امتنانك أو رضاك عن منتج أو خدمة   |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 9- استخدام الرسائل الخاصة (الدايركت أو الخاص) لتطلب معلومات اضافيه حول منتج أو خدمة من خلال حسابات الشركات على شبكات التواصل الاجتماعي  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 10- استخدام الرسائل الخاصة (الدايركت أو الخاص) لتشتكي أو لتعبر بشكل سلبي عن منتج أو خدمة من خلال حسابات الشركات على شبكات التواصل الاجتماعي   |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 11- استخدام الرسائل الخاصة (الدايركت أو الخاص) لتعبر عن امتنانك أو رضاك عن منتج أو خدمة من خلال حسابات الشركات على شبكات التواصل  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 12- استخدام ما تعرضه الشركات من محتوى على حساباتها في مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي لتوصي أصدقائك أو تلفت انتباههم لخدمة أو لمنتج من خلال ذكر حسابات اصدقائك عبر ما تعرضه الشركات من محتوى (Tag and Mentions) |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 13- شراء منتج أو خدمة مباشرة عبر أحد حسابات شبكات التواصل الاجتماعي الخاصة بشركة ما.  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 14- الاستفادة من العروض التي تقدمها بعض الشركات على حسابات شبكات التواصل الاجتماعي الخاصة بها   |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 15- المشاركة في المسابقات أو السحوبات على جوائز التي تقدمها بعض الشركات على حساباتها في شبكات التواصل الاجتماعي   |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 16- فتح الإعلانات المعروضة على شبكات التواصل الاجتماعي والتي تخص شركات أو علامات تجارية تقوم انت بمتابعتها  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 17- فتح الإعلانات المعروضة على شبكات التواصل الاجتماعي والتي تخص شركات أو علامات تجارية لا تقوم بمتابعتها   |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 18- الإنضمام الى حساب خاص بإحدى الشركات على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي بعد رؤيتك لإعلان لها على هذه الشبكات  |

**11- أي من وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي التالية هي المفضلة لديك للتواصل مع الشركات ( التواصل يشمل الإطلاع على جديد الشركات, استفسار و طلب معلومات و التعبير عن الراي حول منتج أو خدمة, التقديم على وظائف , الخ.. (اختر أكثر من خيار إذا لزم):**

□ قوقل بلس □ فيسبوك □ تويتر □ انستقرام □ بينترست □ سناب تشات □ يوتيوب □ لنكدان □ أخرى  
(أذكرها).....

## 12- ما مدى موافقتك على العبارات التالية:

| أوافق بشدة            | أوافق                 | محايد                 | لا أوافق              | لا أوافق أبدا         |   |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 1- أعتبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي قناة جيدة لمعرفة المزيد عن المنتجات والخدمات التي تهمني                  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 2- أعتبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي قناة جيدة للتعبير عن الرضا أو الاستياء عن منتج أو خدمة أو شركة           |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 3- وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي مكنت من وصول رأيي للشركات  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 4- وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي هي قناة جيدة للحوار مع الشركات   |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 5- وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي هي قناة أخرى لتزجني الشركات باعلاناتها   |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 6- معظم الشركات لا تملك المعرفة الكافية باستخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي بالشكل الأمثل                    |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 7- بشكل عام، أعتقد أن التفاعل مع الشركات عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي يمكن أن يكون مفيد بالنسبة لي كمستهلك |

## 13- ما مدى موافقتك مع العبارات التالية:

| أوافق بشدة            | أوافق                 | محايد                 | لا أوافق              | لا أوافق أبدا         |  |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 1- التفاعل مع الشركات من خلال وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي يبدو أكثر ملائمة و فاعلية مقارنة بقنوات الاتصال الأخرى (مكالمة، فاكس .. الخ) |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 2- التفاعل مع الشركات من خلال وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي يبدو أسرع مقارنة بقنوات الاتصال الأخرى                                       |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 3- التفاعل مع الشركات من خلال وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي يبدو أقل رسمية مقارنة بقنوات الاتصال الأخرى                                  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 4- أجد أن التواصل مع الشركات عن طريق وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي أسهل مقارنة بقنوات الاتصال الأخرى                                     |

## 14- إلى أي مدى توافق مع العبارات التالية:

| أوافق بشدة            | أوافق                 | محايد                 | لا أوافق              | لا أوافق أبدا         |  |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 1- أحب أن أتواصل مع الشركات التي تهمني عن طريق وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي         |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 2- من المرجح أني سأستخدم وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي للتواصل مع الشركات التي تهمني |

|                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |   |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 3- بشكل عام، موقفي تجاه التفاعل مع الشركات عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي إيجابي |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|

#### 15- إلى أي مدى توافق مع العبارات التالية

| لا أوافق أبدا         | لا أوافق              | محايد                 | أوافق                 | أوافق بشدة            |   |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 1- أعتبر انه من الأمن اعطاء معلومات شخصية عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي   |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 2- أخشى من أن المعلومات التي أبعثها من خلال حسابات وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي للشركات يمكن أن تستخدم بشكل خاطئ             |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 3- لدي ثقة في صحة المعلومات التي أقرأها عبر حسابات وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي الخاصة بالشركات                              |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 4- من السهل معرفة ما إذا كانت شركة ما تتصرف بطريقة غير صادقة أو غير أخلاقية عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي                 |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 5- من الصعب الوثوق بالشركات عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي   |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 6- من المرجح أن أقاطع شركة ما إذا اكتشفت أنها تلجئ إلى الكذب والعمل بشكل غير أخلاقي أو صادق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 7- أخشى من أن أندم في وقت لاحق على المعلومات التي أشاركها الشركات عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي اليوم                     |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 8- أفكر بحذر قبل كتابة أي شيء عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي لأتأكد من أنني قادر على الدفاع عما كتبته لاحقا                |

..... End of survey.....

## Appendix 7 – Responses cited by companies to why they adopted social media

**Why did your company adopt social media? Write all the reasons.**

To advertise & introduce products

A quick way to achieve brand awareness

In order to reach the world to communicate

For marketing

To get leads and to reach clients

For marketing

Keeping up with the market trends - Social media is powerful and effective marketing method - Social media has become a key part of marketing

Brand Awareness, Direct Sales, Search engine

Because it is the windows open to the world this time - and to connect with customers from different countries and increase the rate of sales

To present the company's services and answer any question from customers

For marketing and forming relationships and to sell our services

To reach big segment of our clients

For digital marketing

For marketing and communication with customers and suppliers is an easy way

For marketing and Communicating with customers

Generate awareness and sales

To reach the consumer

In order to achieve the greatest possible exposure in areas where we do not have offices. In addition, since we target the businessmen class since the beginning of establishing our business we found from our experience that electronic marketing is the best marketing tool for this purpose

more exposure (spread)

fast exposure (spread)

For exposure, communication and advertising

For expanding, spreading and reaching the client by all available means

To be closer to the audience and customers more accurately

Because it is a useful way to communicate and to develop

To advertise and communicate with the public and to disseminate the culture of coffee preparation

It became a pressing need nowadays, and it is the easiest way to market and spread your services and products and to choose the target market

Because it is cost effective marketing

A quick way to achieve brand awareness and to increased sales. And to follow on the footsteps of other companies



Interactive marketing, for communication and for feedback reception

for the easiness of presenting our products

It is an easy way to reach the biggest number of interested clients and also for marketing of products through social media influencers

For target audience

E-marketing

To increase the number of clients and sales

For marketing and reaching clients

To reach the consumer

For marketing

To create awareness of our business

To increase brand awareness and facilitate reaching the customers and receiving their inquiries and suggestions

To attract clients

To reach the biggest possible threat of customers to view products, communicate with them easily

To present our services

To introduce more people to our services due to the wide spread of social media, as well as to create promotions and thus increase marketing and sales

To reach target market more easily and to save the shop rental fees, and to test the success or failure of the business

In short, it is the present and future (near) of the media, advertising and marketing

For marketing & advertising

For marketing

There is a need to use social media by the marketer because of the tendency of most customers to search for products and services through the internet

For marketing and customer service

To communicate with clients and increase sales

To reach potential clients and to present samples of our work. Also, to create brand awareness and to get leads

for marketing and create awareness of our products

For marketing

For advertising, and attracting and communicating with customers

For marketing & advertising

## Appendix 8 – Future work study

### a) Proposed study

This study is continuity to the current research which started with research activity A, B and C. It aims to:

- To investigate the associations between the social media maturity criteria with the actual performance on the social media accounts (through a regression test).
- To confirm the association between the final maturity stage of companies and the 6 identified maturity criteria (infrastructure, providing social media training, availability of financial resources, perceived usefulness of social media, the consistency of social media with the business goals, having a LinkedIn account).
- To test the tools in terms of its usability, perceived ease of use & usefulness, attitude and behavioural intention.

### b) Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework of the research activity D involves 4 main parts:

- Demographics
- Social media details of the company
- Details about the 6 identified new criteria
- Using the online assessment tool and answer the evaluation survey.

Figure (35) presents the conceptual framework of research activity of the next study.

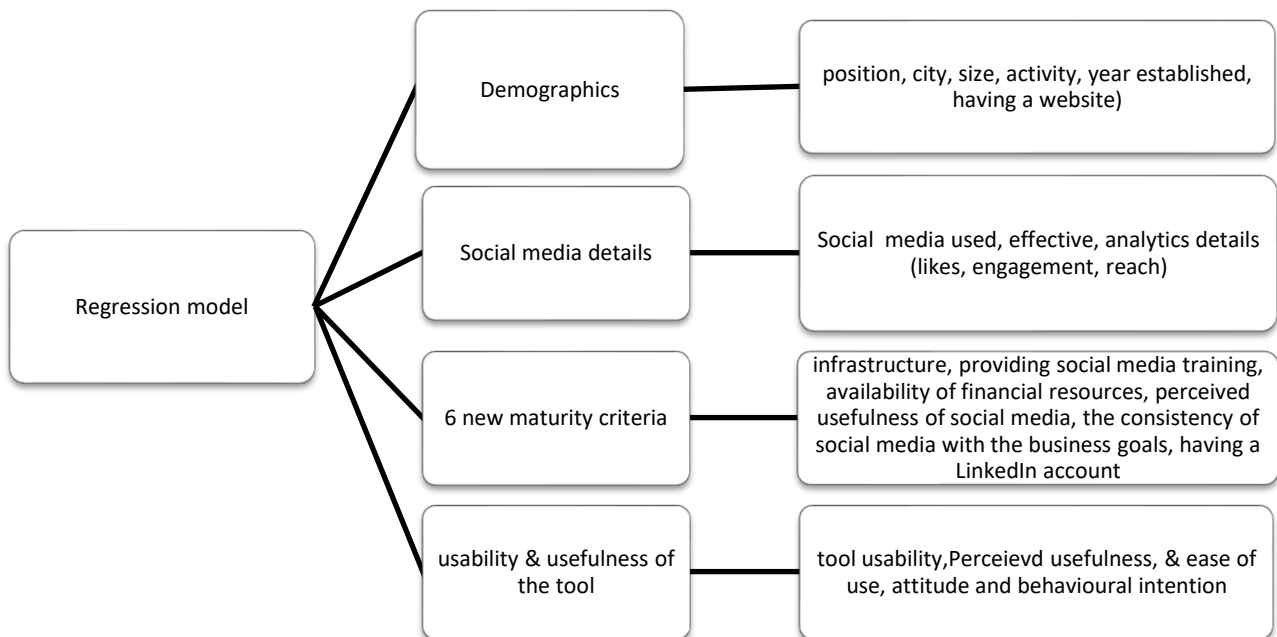


Figure 75 Conceptual framework of the future study

### c) Social media maturity tool development & evaluation

The last objective of the current research was to create an online tool that helps companies evaluate their social media maturity and be able to identify their weaknesses and strengths in using social media. The tool was created using HTML and can be found on: [www.socialmedia.ac](http://www.socialmedia.ac)

In the next section, the components of the tool will be discussed.

### d) Social media assessment tool development

Based on the social media maturity assessment framework which was developed in an earlier stage of the current research, the tool was created as an HTML web application. The domain name of the website is: <http://www.socialmedia.ac/>

The website consists of the following sections:

- **Title:** social media assessment tool
- **About:** an introduction about the tool and how to use it. See figure (36)

“This is a test that business owners or managers can take in order to assess the maturity of their companies’ social media use. The aim of the test is to help them understand where they stand and what their weakness & strength points are.

In this test, there are 4 levels of social media maturity: Level 1, level 2, level 3 and level 4. Level 1 = not mature, which means your social media use lacks a lot of elements to bring value, whereas level 4 = the most mature, which means your business is advanced in their use of social media.

The test consists of 7 questions; each has 4 options to choose from. When you take the test you must answer based on the real situation in your company, not what you think is correct.

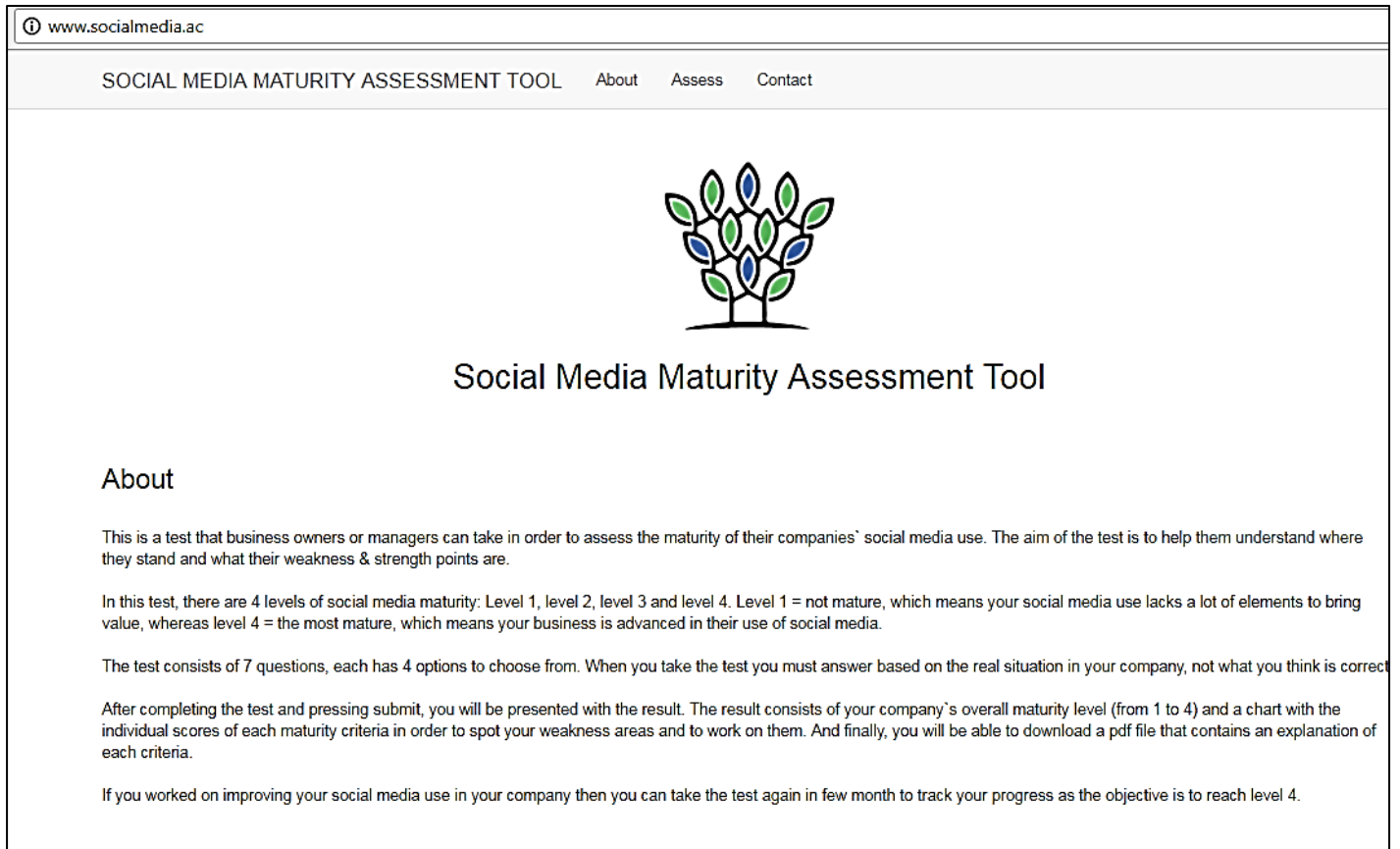
After completing the test and pressing submit, you will be presented with the result. The result consists of your company’s overall maturity level (from 1 to 4) and a chart with the individual scores of each maturity criteria in order to spot your weakness areas and to work on them. And finally, you will be able to download a pdf file that contains an explanation of each criterion.

If you worked on improving your social media use in your company then you can take the test again in few months to track your progress as the objective is to reach level 4”.

- **Assess:** This section includes the social media maturity test presented in Appendix 1. See figure (37).
- **Test Result:** This section appears after a company takes the test and press [submit]. This section includes the following 4 parts:
  - Overall maturity score achieved by the company.
  - A bar chart presenting the individual scores achieved in each maturity criteria.
  - A figure presenting the 4 stages of social media maturity.

- A download button for a PDF file that explains each maturity criteria in more details. See figure (38).

**Contact:** This section includes the contact details of the researcher. See figure (37)



**Figure 76 Layout of the website (about) section**

www.socialmedia.ac

### Answer the following questions to assess the social media maturity level in your business

**Question 1:** When it comes to the top management/owner support for social media marketing in your company, which of these options better reflects the current situation in your company:

- ☐ Social media marketing in my company has no support from top management/owner, it has only the individual support of the employee who works on it.
- ☐ Social media marketing in my company has the support of mid management only (example: the marketing manager).
- ☐ Social media marketing in my company has the support of top management (the director/owner).
- ☐ My company is social media oriented. Social media is an essential part of the company's identity.

**Question 2:** When it comes to the social media budget in your company, which of these options better reflects the current situation in your company:

- ☐ There is no financial budget spent for social media.
- ☐ There is random insignificant budget spent on social media.
- ☐ There is adequate but unstable budget spent on social media.
- ☐ There is dedicated specific and stable budget for social media in my company.

**Question 3:** When it comes to the social media strategy in your company, which of these options better reflects the current situation in your company:

- ☐ There are no clear or specific objectives/strategy in managing social media in my company.
- ☐ There are some operational objectives & tactics for social media in my company.
- ☐ There is a clear social media strategy with specific objectives in my company.
- ☐ There is a clear social media strategy that is integrated with the overall marketing strategy and the vision of the company.

**Question 4:** When it comes to the social media policy in your company, which of these options better reflects the current situation in your company:

- ☐ There is no policy for social media use in my company.
- ☐ There is no policy for using social media but it is clear that there is a need for one.
- ☐ There is a generic policy recently created.
- ☐ There is a social media policy that covers internal and external use of social media.

**Question 5:** When it comes to the social media measurement in your company, which of these options better reflects the current situation in your company:

- ☐ We do not measure social media activities on our accounts.
- ☐ We track raw data (number of followers, comments, likes, etc).
- ☐ KPI measurement (associating each social media objective to a set of metrics).
- ☐ We use dashboards (advanced measurement)

**Question 6:** When it comes to using social media measurement tools in your company, which of these options better reflects the current situation in your company:

- ☐ There are no tools used for measurement.
- ☐ Tracking basic social media alerts available on our social media accounts.
- ☐ Using free social media listening and analysing tools.
- ☐ Using paid sophisticated measurement tools, 360 multi-channel tools for collecting & analysing data, reporting and evaluation.

**Question 7:** When it comes to the process of managing social media in your company, which of these options better reflects the current situation in your company:

- ☐ Only an individual is involved in managing the company's social media presence, no specific process or involvement from any department in the company.
- ☐ Only a group of people is involved in managing social media in the company, there is no involvement from other department in the company.
- ☐ There is cooperation in social media processes and management between some divisions in the company.
- ☐ Social media is integrated within the overall company's process. All departments are involved.

SUBMIT!

## Contact Me

Basma Alotaibi

Researcher

Basma.alotaibi@yahoo.com

Figure 77 Layout of the website (test) and (contact) sections



Figure 78 Website layout, (result) section

## **e) Social media maturity tool evaluation**

### **Definitions**

Macleod (1994) states that we should look at usability as “the quality of use of an interactive system by its (intended) users for achieving specific work goals and tasks in particular work environments”. This view is reflected in an emerging international standard, ISO 9241 - 11 (ISO 1993b), which provides guidance on assessing usability in terms of "the effectiveness, efficiency and satisfaction with which specified users can achieve specified goals in particular environments".

According to Arh and Blazic, (2008) “All of the definitions, including ISO, consider multiple factors, such as ease of learning, ease of use, effectiveness of the system, user satisfaction; the definitions connect those factors to the impact on humans. There are many evaluation methods [8] used in usability evaluations. To ensure a software project has the essential usability characteristics, we divide the usability methods into inspection methods (without end users) and test methods (with end users). Testing with end users is the most fundamental usability method and is in some sense indispensable. It provides direct information about how people use our systems and their exact problems with a specific interface. There are several methods for testing usability, the most common being thinking aloud, field observation, and questionnaires”.

### **f) Evaluation objectives**

For the purpose of this study, the main focus is the end user which consists of marketing managers or owners of small and medium companies. The evaluation stage has 3 objectives:

- To measure the effectiveness of the maturity test
- To measure the efficiency of the website
- To measure the satisfaction of the user about the maturity test result and the website

### **g) Evaluation components**

Based on the evaluation objectives discussed in the previous section of the current research, the evaluation of the social media maturity assessment tool focuses on the following 6 factors:

#### **Usability of the tool:**

Macleod (1994) states that we should look at Usability as “the quality of use of an interactive system by its (intended) users for achieving specific work goals and tasks in particular work environments”. According to Arh and Blazic, (2008) “All of the definitions, including ISO 9241/11[4], consider multiple factors, such as ease of learning, ease of use, effectiveness of the system, user satisfaction; the definitions connect those factors to the impact on humans.



**Perceived usefulness:**

Perceived usefulness was part of the Technology Acceptance model created by Davis (1985) which can (along with perceived ease of use) predict the attitude of users toward the usage of a system (Chuttur, 2009). Davis defined Perceived usefulness as “The prospective user’s subjective probability that using a specific application system will increase his or her job performance within an organisational context”

**Ease of use**

Also Davis (1985) defined ease of use as “the degree to which the prospective user expects the target system to be free of effort”

**Attitude towards using the tool:**

Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) defined the attitude as “a person’s positive or negative feelings about performing the actual behaviour”.

**Behavioural intention:**

According to Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) behavioural intention is defined as “a measure of one’s intention to perform a behaviour”. (Chuttur, 2009)

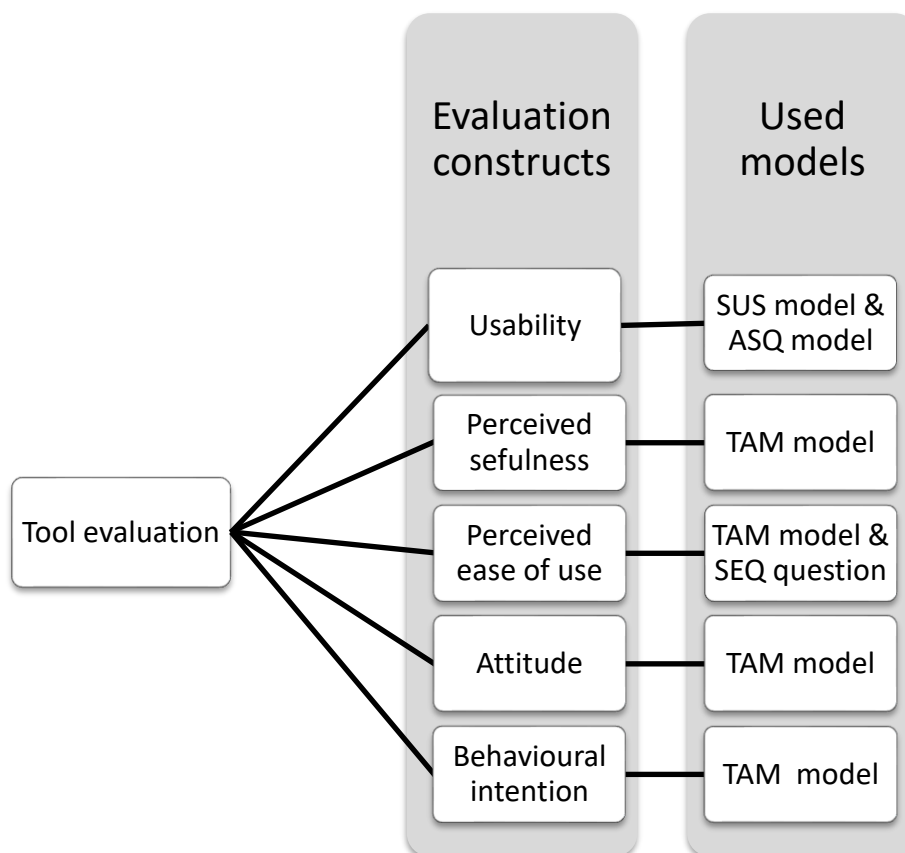
**h) Evaluation supporting references**

Table (78) presents the supporting system evaluation models that will be used to evaluate the social media maturity assessment tool.

| method  | constructs   |
|---|--|
| <b>TAM model by (Davis, 1989)</b>   | Perceived usefulness<br>Perceived ease of use<br>Attitude<br>Self-predicted future use |
| <b>System Usability Scale (SUS) by (Brooke, 1996)</b>                               | 10 questions   |
| <b>Measuring User Satisfaction of the Human-Computer Interface by (Chin, (1988)</b> | 2 open-ended questions   |
| <b>After-Scenario Questionnaire (ASQ) by Lewis, J. R. (1991)</b>                    | 3 questions  |
| <b>The Single Ease Question (SEQ) by Sauro &amp; Dumas, 2009</b>                    | 1 question   |

Table 90 Supporting system evaluation models

#### i) Evaluation questions

Based on the models discussed in table (79), the evaluation questions are:

| Questions  | Reference               |
|--|-------------------------|
| <b>Perceived usefulness (7 points likert scale)</b>                          | (Davis, 1989)           |
| Using the tool in my job would enable me to accomplish tasks more quickly    |                         |
| Using the tool would improve my job performance                              |                         |
| Using the tool in my job would increase my productivity                      |                         |
| Using the system would enhance my effectiveness on the job                   |                         |
| Using the tool would make it easier to do my job                             |                         |
| I would find the tool useful in my job                                       |                         |
| <b>Perceived ease of use</b>   |                         |
| Learning to use the tool would be easy for me                                |                         |
| I would find it easy to get the tool to do what I want it to do              |                         |
| My interaction with the tool would be clear and understandable               |                         |
| I would find the tool to be flexible to interact with                        |                         |
| It would be easy for me to become skilful at using the tool                  |                         |
| I would find the tool easy to use  |                         |
| <b>Attitude Toward Usage</b>   | Alharbi and Drew (2014) |
| I believe it is a good idea to use the social media maturity assessment tool |                         |
| I like the idea of using the tool  |                         |
| Using the tool is a positive idea  | Alharbi and Drew (2014) |
| <b>Behavioural Intention to Use</b>  |                         |
| I plan to use the maturity tool in the future                                |                         |
| Assuming that I have access to the maturity tool, I intend to use it         | (Brooke, 1996)          |
| I predict that I will use the maturity tool in a regular basis in the future |                         |
| <b>System Usability Scale (SUS) (5 points Likert scale)</b>                  |                         |
| 1. I think that I would like to use this tool frequently                     |                         |
| 2. I found the tool unnecessarily complex                                    |                         |

|   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| 3. I thought the tool was easy to use   |                     |
| 4. I think that I would need the support of a technical person to be able to use this tool                                |                     |
| 5. I found the various functions in this tool were well integrated  |                     |
| 6. I thought there was too much inconsistency in this tool  |                     |
| 7. I would imagine that most people would learn to use this tool very quickly   |                     |
| 8. I found the tool very cumbersome to use  |                     |
| 9. I felt very confident using the tool   |                     |
| 10. I needed to learn a lot of things before I could get going with this tool   |                     |
| <b>After scenario questionnaire (7 points Likert scale)</b>   |                     |
| 1) Overall, I am satisfied with the ease of completing the tasks in this scenario.  | Lewis, J. R. (1991) |
| 2) Overall, I am satisfied with the amount of time it took to complete the tasks in this scenario.                        |                     |
| 3) Overall, I am satisfied with the support information (on-line help, messages, documentation) when completing the tasks |                     |

Table 91 Evaluation questions

### j) Survey development

The survey contains the following sections:

- Demographics (position, city, size, activity, year established, having a website)
- Social media details of the company (what social media networks used, which ones are the most effective, what are the URLs for the social media accounts) and how many hours dedicated for social media per week)
- 5 points Likert scale type question comprising 6 statements related to the 6 maturity criteria found in this study: (infrastructure, providing social media training, availability of financial resources, perceived usefulness of social media, the consistency of social media with the business goals, having a LinkedIn account)
- The maturity score the company achieved
- 6 questions testing the Usability, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and attitude of the tool.

### k) Subject

The survey targets owners/ managers or marketing managers of small and medium companies located in Saudi Arabia, and who use social media in their business. The rationale behind targeting this segment is because this study focuses only on SMEs located in Saudi Arabia. Companies are affected by the cultural, economic, religious and geographical location that they operate in, which means that social media adoption factors in companies in UK for example might be different than the adoption factors of a company in Riyadh or Dubai. And since this study's main focus is to understand the SMEs in Saudi Arabia, the targeted population must be small and medium companies in Saudi Arabia that use social media.

## The survey: Social media maturity assessment tool evaluation

Dear respondent,

My name is Basmah Alotaibi and I am a Ph.D researcher in the school of Science & Technology at Middlesex University in London. My research examines social media adoption and maturity factors and criteria among small & medium companies in Saudi Arabia. Part of my research involves developing an online tool that can help managers and business owners assess the stage of progress of their social media marketing with the aim of identifying strength and weakness points in their business use of social media.

This is an invitation to participate in the evaluation of this social media assessment tool.

The tool: <http://www.socialmedia.ac/>

1) The tool involves 7 questions related to different areas of social media marketing in your company. At the end of the test you will press submit then you will be presented with the score of maturity (success) your company achieved based on the test. The scores vary from 1 = not mature, 2 = not mature, 3 = somehow mature, 4= most mature.

2) After reading your result you can download a PDF file that explains the 7 maturity criteria involve in the test.

3) After reading your PDF file you will be asked to fill in this evaluation form. Please note that your company's identity will not be disclosed in the research and it will be anonymous.

I greatly appreciate your participation and I would like to assure you that your responses will be treated confidentially and solely for the academic purposes.

Thank you.

## Consent form

Please read the following consent form before you start the survey: <https://goo.gl/Q9ax2d> by clicking "Yes" you agree to participate in this study.

## Demographics

1. My position in the company is:
2. My company is located in
  - ☐ Riyadh
  - ☐ Jeddah
  - ☐ Dammam
  - ☐ Khobar
  - ☐ Other:
3. The number of employees in my company is
  - ☐ From 1 to 5
  - ☐ 6 to 49
  - ☐ 50 to 249
  - ☐ More than 249
4. The activity of my company is
 

.....
5. The year my company was founded is
 

.....

6. Does your company own a website?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

## Social media details

7. The social media networks that my company has accounts on are: (Example: Facebook, twitter, etc.)

.....

8. The URL to each social media account that my company owns is:

.....

9. The social media accounts that are the most effective for my company in terms of number of Followers, engagement, views, reach etc. are:

.....

10. The hours that my company dedicate for social media per week is:

- ☐ 0 hours
- ☐ 1 to 20 hours
- ☐ 21 to 40 hours
- ☐ More than 40 hours

11. To what extent do you agree with the following statements (your response must be based on what is happening in your company in reality)

| Statements   | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|--|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Your company has the required social media infrastructure (stable internet, computers, desks, etc.)  |                |       |         |          |                   |
| Your company provides social media training to its employee who is responsible for managing the company's social media accounts (training here could be through free sources or paid). |                |       |         |          |                   |
| Your company has enough financial resources to spend on social media.  |                |       |         |          |                   |
| I believe that social media is useful to my business   |                |       |         |          |                   |
| Social media is consistent with the overall business goals of my company   |                |       |         |          |                   |
| My company has a LinkedIn account  |                |       |         |          |                   |

## After the maturity test

12. What is the overall maturity level of your company after taking the test?

.....

13. To what extent do you agree with the result from 0 to 7, where 0=I strongly disagree and 7= I strongly agree

Strongly disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

14. Rate the following statements from 1 to 5, according to what you think. 1= Strongly disagree, 5= Strongly agree

| Statements   | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|--|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Using the tool in marketing would enable me to accomplish tasks more quickly |                |       |         |          |                   |
| Using the tool would improve the company's social media performance          |                |       |         |          |                   |
| Using the tool in my company would increase its productivity                 |                |       |         |          |                   |
| Using the tool would enhance my effectiveness on social media                |                |       |         |          |                   |
| Using the tool would make it easier to do my job                             |                |       |         |          |                   |
| I would find the tool useful in my job                                       |                |       |         |          |                   |
| Learning to use the tool would be easy for me                                |                |       |         |          |                   |
| I would find it easy to get the tool to do what I want it to do              |                |       |         |          |                   |
| My interaction with the tool would be clear and understandable               |                |       |         |          |                   |
| I would find the tool to be flexible to interact with                        |                |       |         |          |                   |
| It would be easy for me to become skilful at using the tool                  |                |       |         |          |                   |
| I would find the tool easy to use  |                |       |         |          |                   |

15. Rate the following statements from 1 to 5, according to what you think. 1= Strongly disagree, 5= Strongly agree

| Statements  | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| I think that I would like to use this tool frequently                                   |                |       |         |          |                   |
| I found the tool unnecessarily complex  |                |       |         |          |                   |
| I thought the tool was easy to use  |                |       |         |          |                   |
| I think that I would need the support of a technical person to be able to use this tool |                |       |         |          |                   |
| I found the various functions in this tool were well integrated                         |                |       |         |          |                   |
| I thought there was too much inconsistency in this tool                                 |                |       |         |          |                   |
| I would imagine that most people would learn to use this tool very quickly              |                |       |         |          |                   |
| I found the tool very exhausting to use   |                |       |         |          |                   |
| I felt very confident using the tool  |                |       |         |          |                   |
| I needed to learn a lot of things before I could get going with this tool               |                |       |         |          |                   |

16. List the most positive aspect(s) about the tool:

.....

.....  
.....  
17. List the most negative aspect(s) about the tool:

.....  
.....

## Appendix 9 - CONSENT FORM

**Title of Project:** Assessing social media readiness and maturity among SMEs in Saudi Arabia

**Name of Researcher:** Basmah Alotaibi

**Email:** [BA465@live.mdx.ac.uk](mailto:BA465@live.mdx.ac.uk)

**Supervisor:** Dr George Dafoulas

**Email:** [g.dafoulas@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:g.dafoulas@mdx.ac.uk)

1. I consent to participate in the above study which collects information in relation to social media maturity in companies.
2. I am aware that I have the possibility to ask the researcher questions about the study and the survey.
3. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.
4. I agree that my non-identifiable research data may be stored in National Archives and be used anonymously by others for future research. I am assured that the confidentiality of my data will be upheld through the removal of any personal identifiers.
5. I confirm that by completing the survey I agree to take part in the above study.



## Appendix 10 - CONSENT FORM

**Title of Project: Consumers` social media readiness in Saudi Arabia**

**Name of Researcher: Basmah Alotaibi**

**Email: [BA465@live.mdx.ac.uk](mailto:BA465@live.mdx.ac.uk)**

**Supervisor: Dr George Dafoulas**

**Email: [g.dafoulas@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:g.dafoulas@mdx.ac.uk)**

1. I consent to participate in the above study which collects information in relation to consumers' social media readiness
2. I am aware that I have the possibility to ask the researcher questions about the study and the survey.
3. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.
4. I agree that my non-identifiable research data may be stored in National Archives and be used anonymously by others for future research. I am assured that the confidentiality of my data will be upheld through the removal of any personal identifiers.
5. I confirm that by completing the survey I agree to take part in the above study.